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OF THE

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

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TRANSLATOR'S

PREFATORY REMARKS.

In times of peace, when the powers of woman are limited to the exercise of virtues in (as some, with self-complacency, say) her proper sphere,—domestic life,—we know little of her public virtues, her fortitude, heroism, or intellect, her capacity to do, or to suffer. The same devotion, the same patient endurance, the same ceaseless love and faith are exemplified by her in the circle of our daily acquaintance. But the magnitude of her virtues of forbearance is so notorious as to become common-place. Cast a reflecting glance around—how brave is the heart, how stout the courage of the poor timid, child-burthened widow, bringing unknown energies into play, struggling against chill adversity, and the chilling neglect of friends, *for the sake of* her orphans; or of the humble girl,

bearing her poverty, the rich man's contumely, the oppressor's scorn, and, worse than all the other ills, temptation; and all to preserve her good name and self-approbation, for little knows or recks the world of such hidden heroism. In power of mind and force of character, every day shows woman equal to the nobler sex. And yet even in this age of extending knowledge, when a more general credence of the important influence she directly and indirectly exercises over the destinies of mankind, is gaining ground, not few are they who would still pronounce her incapable of rising beyond the ability of a careful nurse, or a clever housekeeper; thinking, with honest Iago, her destiny fulfilled, if she

"Suckle fools and chronicle small beer."

All readers of history, sacred or profane, will recollect innumerable instances of the public and political consequence of women, and of the power they have wielded with consummate ability. Times of tumult and excitement bring her forward, and enable her to justify her title to some higher character than that of being man's affectionate friend and helpmate, the solace of his leisure moments, and all the infinite variety of appellations by which the female sex are designated,

subordinating them to man as their undoubted superior in wisdom, intelligence, and ability;—a proposition which, despite "Paradise Lost," and a whole host of authors, I am disposed to dispute *in toto*, or, where exceptionally true, to attribute rather to improper education, than inferior organization.

The general influence of the female portion of the population on the Revolution of '89 was very great, and in their out-door demonstrations, in which the French so especially delight, the women were ever among the foremost actors, not merely as attendants on the wounded, but as actual combatants; and in the attacks on the Bastille and the Tuilleries, and other great events, they had an equal share of the perils and the honours of the day. Indeed, the crisis of the Revolution was itself precipitated by women: had not the visit of the female army to Versailles taken place, the King might have lived, and monarchy remained intact in France.

The National Assembly had been seated at Versailles for months, and the insincerity of the Court, the rumours of foreign aid, the formation of an emigrant army on the frontier, had thoroughly roused and excited the Parisians as to the political aspect of affairs: while the frightful destitution,

almost amounting to famine, from the cessation of labour and dearth of food, partly from the severity of the seasons, partly from the indisposition of the peasantry to work, imported a new and more fearful element of discontent and tumult into their very homes, invading the mothers' hearts through the cries of their starving little ones; and rousing them to an active part and personal interest in the Revolution, now a matter of life and death, and not a matter of political or social rights and privileges. This terrific source of agitation was further swollen by the artful insinuations and denunciations of the demagogues, who, dissatisfied with the comparatively tranquil and constitutional course affairs were taking, while the Assembly were wasting precious hours in discussing abstract questions, and futile arrangements at Versailles, poisoned the minds of the Parisians, already infuriate and desperate with their privations, by tales of the stoppage of corn at the millers, the deliberate and wanton destruction of grain by the foreign troops, the buying up of all means of sustenance; all by the Court or through the Court, through Marie Antoinette and her Austrians. These tales fell upon ears only too greedy, and minds too credulous. The France of that day was divided into the rich and the poor, there was no

middle class to keep revolutionary incendiarism in check, and to stand up in defence of property, law and order, as we have seen done so effectively in 1848. The Parisians too, felt themselves invincible, for had they not, unarmed, taken the Bastile, garrisoned and fortified?

So the women of Paris rose in a body, and, to the number of many thousands, marched upon Versailles, to bring back the King to Paris. The King, up to this time, and even afterwards, was in possession of the loyalty, although somewhat impaired, of Paris, and they thought that, were he but once more with them, free from the machinations of the foreigners, his heart would again be turned to his people; and the traditional reverence for "the divinity that doth hedge a king," so far prevailed, as to induce a belief that the mere wave of his sceptre, or the sign-manual to a proclamation, would lower the price of bread, and hold out a relief to the famishing multitude.

Many fainted by the way-side, never to rise again, but a large body arrived at Versailles; they filled the Chamber of Deputies, and silencing those of the Members whom they disapproved of, and calling for their darling little Mirabeau, who being, however, no popularity hunter, in this guise, at least, *failed* to respond to their call: unless, as is

probable enough, that he would not commit himself by sanctioning the outbreak; and to tranquilize the poor petitioners, as he could undoubtedly have done, would not have been in accordance with his own views, presenting, as the tumult did, a means of constraining the Court to the Assembly's wishes. The mob filled the courtyard of the palace, where the King ordered them a supply of such food as the town would afford, and even saw a deputation of them in the palace itself, where his kind and paternal demeanour and promises of assistance had such effect on them that they had not heart to state their wants, but burst into tears, and fell at his feet.

The regiment of Flanders, just introduced into the chateau, was completely gained over by the women, among whom the notorious Théroigne de Méricourt appeared conspicuous; and numbers of armed men having now joined the women, the condition of the royal family was considered somewhat alarming.

La Fayette, who was in Paris, having, in the mean time, heard of the tumult, hurried to Versailles, at the head of such National Guards as he could muster; and, on his arrival, persuaded the King to sign the Declaration of Rights, a matter long in dispute between the Crown and the

', and to promulgate some decrees as to
lies of bread. This pacified the mob;
demonstration was concluded by the
d Queen, under the protection of La
ıppearing in the balcony over the court-
ere they were received with acclamations.
ılt was appeased, night came on wet, and
the women set out for Paris again. The
Versailles was guarded; but a jealousy
nhappily arisen between the *Gardes du*
ıd the Versailles National Guard, on
of offensive expressions and acts at a
easonable banquet, given by the Queen,
alace, to the *Gardes du Corps*,—the
of the palace was confided, as a point of
to the Body Guards, while the Nationals
duty outside—another source of irrita-
upon them had fallen the heat and
f the day, and La Fayette, their general,
the saviour of the Crown.

night, a number of the dregs of the
populace, who had, in all probability,
h no other view than the prospective
riot, broke into the palace; and, after
o of the faithful *Gardes du Corps*, made
to the royal apartments, and, after a night
ent peril, attempts having been made to

ɔe by the Queen, but frustrated by the National
:d of Versailles, it was decided that the King
ld return to Paris, whither he accordingly
: in procession, headed by the ominous standard
e heads of the decapitated Body Guards slain
ıe defence of the Queen's person.

ıis result of the step taken by the women of
ı put a death-blow to the moderates of the
mbly, and gave new impetus to the hopes of
ɜxtreme parties. Its consequences were incal-
ɔle.

ıe energetic attitude thus assumed by the
en was not belied by subsequent conduct.
r had their notables, heroic as well in the
mity of their vice, as in the greatness of their
lect and virtue, and in the unparalleled depths
ıeir misery and misfortune. I have adopted
erm heroic in the view of the ancient tragic
ɪrs, as bearing reference to the magnitude of
virtues, crimes, or misfortunes, rather than in
:ommon and vulgar war-meaning of the term.
women, like the men of the Revolution, had
heroic characters. The great instances of
e Antoinette, and Madame Roland, as ruling
ls, the patriotism of Charlotte Corday, were not
lled, if equalled, by any of the male actors in
reat arena; while the picture, in which these

more remarkable characters occupy the fore-ground, is backed and filled-in by a host of inferior, though not unimportant, personages, whose conduct and careers out-vied those of their competitors of the opposite sex.

The first of the characters is Marie Antoinette, entitled to this pre-eminence, whether in reference to the elevation of her rank, the great influence she had on the Revolution, or the immensity of her misfortunes. The daughter of kings, the wife and mother of kings, the cynosure of all eyes in the most elegant and polished capital of the world; profuse amid profusion, the envied and admired of all beholders, for station, personal charms, and all the accessories which power, a throne, and youth, can bring to happiness; she saw that power annihilated, her throne overturned, her husband murdered, her friends and adherents massacred and exiled, her son handed over to a profligate and debased ruffian, (worse than death,) her sister and daughter in prison, herself in a dungeon and in rags, deprived of the common necessaries, and debarred of all the sympathies that make life dear even in the hovel; the scoff of the indigent and outcast wretches, whose existence is a disgrace to civilization. Who can measure such a depth of woe? What pen can do justice to such a fall?

What imagination ever invented so fearful a contrast of light and darkness? The lyre that created a Hecuba, a Medea, or a Lear, were needed to tell the tale, and thrill the souls of men by the deep, touching cadences of a mother's lamentations for her first-born and her lord, her sorrows for her fallen state and dignity, herself the sport of circumstance and football of fortune: or else appalling them by their chorus, revealing the tremendous fulfilments of Providence's retributive decrees on the iniquities of a race, in the crash of empire, and the downfall of a line of despots, consummated in the least offending and most harmless of all.

HEROIC WOMEN.

MARIE ANTOINETTE

med to have been created by Nature to con-
with the King, and to entail the eternal
st and pity of posterity on one of those
dramas, which are imperfect unless the
rtunes of a woman complete them. Daughter
aria Theresa, she had begun life in the
s of the Austrian monarchy, being
of the children the Empress held by
and, when she presented herself as a
iant before the faithful Hungarians, and
troops shouted, "Let us die for our King,
Theresa." Her daughter, too, had the
of a king. On her arrival in France, her
y had dazzled the kingdom: that beauty
ow in its full splendour.* She was of a tall
lexible figure: a true daughter of the Tyrol.
wo children she had given the throne, far
injuring, added to the impression of her
n that character of maternal majesty
sits well on the mother of a nation. The

* After the return of the King from Versailles to Paris.

presentiment of her misfortunes, the remembrance of the tragic scenes of Versailles, the inquietudes of each day, had rather paled her early bloom, at the time we are describing her. The natural majesty of her port took nothing from the grace of her movements: her neck, well detached from her shoulders, had those magnificent inflexions which give so much expression to the attitudes. The woman was perceptible beneath the queen, the tenderness of her heart under the majesty of her condition. Her auburn hair was long and silky; her lofty and rather projecting forehead joined the temples, in those fine curves which impart so much delicacy and sensibility to that seat of thought or soul in woman; her eyes of that clear blue, which recals the sky of the North, or the waters of the Danube; the aquiline nose, the nostrils well opened and lightly inflated, where the emotions palpitated—a sign of courage; a large mouth, brilliant teeth, and Austrian, that is, pouting lips; the contour of her face was oval, the physiognomy versatile in expression, and impassioned; in the whole of her features that splendour which cannot be described, which darts from the look, the shadow, the reflections of the countenance, enveloping the whole in a halo, resembling the warm and coloured vapour in which objects touched by the sun float;—last expression of beauty which invests it with the ideal, renders it charming and changes its attractions. With all

these charms, a soul thirsting for attachment, a heart easily moved, but asking only to be fixed; a smile pensive and intelligent, which had nothing vulgar in intimacies and preferences, because she felt herself worthy of friendship.—This was Marie Antoinette, as a woman.

She was sufficient to make the happiness of a man, and the ornament of a court. To inspire an undecided king, and to work out the salvation of a State in difficult circumstances, more was needed,—the genius of Government was needed: the Queen had it not. Nothing could adapt her for the management of the irregular forces in agitation around her; misfortune had not given her time for reflection. Extravagantly welcomed by a perverse court and ardent people, she would fain have believed in the eternity of their sentiments. She had slumbered in the dissipations of Trianon; she had heard the first murmurs of the tempest without believing in the danger; she had trusted to the love she inspired and felt to be in her own heart. The court had become exacting, the people hostile. Instrument of court intrigues on the King's heart, she had at first favoured, then combated, all reforms which could prevent or adjourn the crisis. Her politics were attachments: her system was her alternate abandonment to all who promised the King's safety. The Count d'Artois, a young chivalric prince, had taken empire over her mind. He put

faith in the nobility; talked of his sword. He laughed at the crisis, and disdained that wordy uproar, caballing against the ministers, and injuring business. The Queen, intoxicated with adulation by this circle, urged the King to resume on the morrow what he had been conceding the day before. Her hand was felt in all the agitation of the Government. Her apartments were the heart of a perpetual conspiracy against the Government; the nation at last detected this, and hated her. Her name became, with them, the phantom of counter-revolution. We are prompt to calumniate what we fear, and she was painted under the features of a Messalina. The most infamous pamphlets were circulated respecting her, and the most scandalous anecdotes credited. She might have been accused of tenderness: of depravity, never. Young, lovely, and adored, if her heart had not remained insensible, her mysterious, perhaps innocent sentiments, had never been displayed in scandal. History has its modesty: we shall not violate it.

Women, so sublime in their devotion, are rarely capable of the connecting mind and imperturbability requisite for a political plan. Their policy is in the heart; their passion is too near their reason. Of all the virtues of the throne, they have only courage: they are frequently heroes, seldom statesmen. The Queen was one

more instance of this. She did the King infinite harm: endued with more mind, more soul, more character than he, her superiority only served to inspire him with confidence in ruinous advice. She was at once the charm of his reverses, and the genius of his ruin. She conducted him, step by step, to the scaffold; but she ascended it with him.

[The return of the King and Queen from Versailles to Paris, the forerunner to real misfortunes, had been the momentary result of a popular female movement, having its origin not in any forethought or plan of the ruling demagogues, but in the spontaneous effervescence of the masses of Parisian women, urged on by the irrepressible pangs of hunger and want, and the cries of their little ones, who conceived that, by having the King at Paris, they should remove him from that baleful influence which counselled harsh political measures, and impolitic restrictions on the free circulation of the necessaries of life. The massacre of two of the body guards was an unhappy event, but a mere episodical incident, in no wise a blow meant for the King's person. They were only bringing home "The baker, his wife, and the little apprentice," a sad jest with their own misery and destitution, the baker's presence in his shop being enough to restore bread to those who needed it so woefully. Had Louis XVI. been the man for the occasion, he might have swayed the general love, which still clung to him, to the advantage of the monarchy, and by moderate measures of political and social reform, might have tempered the fire of the nation, and turned it to valuable account, in the development of untried but latent energies. He was not the man. He was the victim of the primogenital law, which, if calculated to save the

e the evils of a disputed succession, also carries it the drawback of an incompetent or vicious Louis was the former. Nature had designed ır a very worthy, virtuous, right-minded trades- Fate, Providence, the course of events, or what- ɛrm the reader prefers, for that guiding principle ich the tide of human affairs is swayed, assigned ıe "kingly part," for which he was utterly un- . Urged on by the fiery, impetuous spirit of the ı, led away by the hereditary contempt of the 'e breathed by all around him, and restrained own weak and inconsequent character from any d line of conduct, he was blown hither and ', now in the hands of one party, then of ano- now the tool of the Queen and the nobility, then ın of the people; and again hoping for succour vithout, and depending on the loyalty of the , until a word from La Fayette or Mirabeau ex- l the newly-formed hopes. And now, too, the bly itself, eager at first in the cause of freedom ıdependence, prompt to assert man's natural eager to surrender every personal and *caste* ge, and to abrogate all distinctions—fearing the of the King's presence at Paris—wanted pusil- usly to check the mighty mass they had set , and, dreading the impending crash, hung back he catastrophe, fearing to contest the supre- vith the demagogues, the day of whose rule they proaching.

ır all these adverse circumstances no wonder g's feeble spirit gave way. He could not brave m, he resolved to avoid it; and by a carefully- ed plan took flight for the frontier with the their children, Madame Elizabeth, and some ı of their suite. At the frontier they were to et Marshal Bouillé, an iron-handed general of *regime*, at the head of the Austrian forces and

the emigrants. Detected when almost in sight of their destination by the sharpsightedness of one Drouet, who recognised the King by the resemblance to his popular portraits, the party was arrested at Varennes, and brought back to Paris, in spite of the urgent personal entreaties of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette to the post-mistress, and others who had charge of the royal captives.

This ill-judged (because unsuccessful) attempt, principally organized by the Queen, whose object was to re-enter France at the head of a force so imposing as to have compelled peace and tranquillity,—notwithstanding that its immediate consequences were averted by a decree of the Assembly of the King's inviolability, and his apparent reconciliation with that body, and assent to the new constitution,—only served afterwards, when new duplicity and tergiversation was apparent, to exasperate the people to extremity; and, stimulated by the furious and inflammatory harangues of the leaders, they made a tumultuous entrance into the Tuilleries to demand the abdication of the King, where, for five hours, the King, protected by a few gentlemen and well-affected National Guards, in the vast hall of the Œil de Bœuf, and the Queen and the children in an adjacent apartment unprotected, were exposed to the brutality, insults, and threats of the dregs of the Parisian faubourgs, who, to the number of 40,000, passed through the palace.

The attempt to force the King to resign the supreme power was unsuccessful, and the Girondin party, feeling the peril of their position—for they it was who, notwithstanding their decree of the inviolability of the King's person, were most clamourous for the abolition of royalty and the establishment of a republic,—organised the memorable attack on the Tuilleries, which, under the fortuitous command of an able military leader, Westermann, met with complete success, and,

ending with the massacre of the Swiss Guards, and the utter downfall and temporary extinction of royalty, paved the way to those disastrous and terrific events which, involving gentle and simple, rich and poor, the oppressor and the oppressed, the innocent and the guilty, in one undistinguished punishment and ruin, and precipitating the whole world into the bloodiest, most destructive, and most universal series of wars ever known, until, in the fulness of time, the measure of calamity was heaped up to overflowing, and the current began to turn,—must for ever occupy the pen of the historian, presenting, as they do, the most awful example of retributive justice, in the world's records of the doings of kings and rulers.]

During the long hours of that night, and the first hours of the dawn, preceding the attack, the Queen and Madame Elizabeth passed in turn from the King's chamber into the room where their children were sleeping, and thence into the council-chamber, where the Ministers were permanently sitting. They crossed the halls filled with their defenders, concealing their tears, and inspiring, by their apparent serenity, their smile, and their words, the confidence they had not yet lost. The presence of these two princesses wandering about, by night, in that palace, in the midst of arms,—the one, mother and Queen, trembling at once for her husband and children; the other, a devoted sister, trembling for her brother, both insensible to their own *dangers,—was the most* eloquent appeal possible to

the compassion, generosity, and anger of the defenders of the chateau.

Marie Antoinette, whom the pamphlets of her enemies have represented in that tremendous night as a crowned fury, carrying exaltation to delirium, despondency to tears, now declaring that she will be nailed to the walls of her palace, then presenting pistols to the King and advising suicide, gave way neither to these excesses nor these weaknesses. She was, with dignity and nature, without affectation of heroism or despondency, all that her sex, her rank, her quality as wife, mother, and Queen, required she should be, in a moment when all the sentiments these various titles should agitate in her were betrayed in her hearing.

The mere presence of the King in the midst of his guards, of that Queen and sister in mourning, the children led by the hand, coming in silent procession through the halls and courts of their home, to solicit the fidelity of their friends, the soldiers' steadfastness their enemies' pity, had in it an eloquence that might dispense with words. The King murmured a few words, scarcely audible, and always the same, like a refrain that needs no thought. Such words, of course, were insufficient to the gravity of the moment. But the Queen, who was following close behind, she elevated these unmeaning addresses by the nobleness of her attitude—*the movement*, at once proud and gracious, of her

head, and the expression of her looks. She would fain have breathed her soul into the King: she was suffering those queenly maternal sentiments which her sex obliged her to retain, only to escape in her mien, in her heightened colour, and mute emotion. It was visible that she wept inwardly, but that her courage and her disdain dried her tears as quickly as they came to the surface. Her respiration was quick, strong, and loud; her bosom heaved with indignation. Her features were worn out and pale with watching, but strung by her will, and exalted by the intrepidity of her soul; her eyes, which spoke by continuous lightning to all the eyes fixed on her; her looks that implored, stirred-up, and dared, at once, according as they fell on cold, friendly, or hostile faces; the anxiety with which she sought in all countenances the impression of the King's words; her raised and palpitating lip, her aquiline nose, nostrils dilated with emotion, the carriage of her head thrown back in danger, her sad step, her proud features, the yet recent traces of that beauty which was beginning to wane under her years, like her fortune under her reverses; the remembrance of the adoration she had once lived on, in these very halls where she was now vainly imploring some arms for her defence; the rays of the morning sun penetrating into the apartment, and playing on her hair like a shadowy crown; the different arms, the crowd, the cheers *or the silence in which she* passed along;—all these

stamped her person with a majesty of courage, of dignity, and sadness, which were equal in the spectators' eyes to the solemnity of the scene and the grandeur of the event. It was the Niobe of monarchy; the statue of royalty fallen from the throne, but neither sullied nor degraded by the fall. She never reigned more than on that day.

She was Queen, despite her people and her fate. Her aspect thrilled the most undecided National Guards, and made their sabres leap from the scabbards. Swiss guards, gendarmerie, grenadiers, volunteers, gentlemen, citizens, and people; all arms, all sentinels, the apartments and staircases, were moved with one enthusiasm at her passage: all their looks, gestures, and words promised her a thousand lives for hers. The pallor of great emotions was spread on all faces. Tears stood in the eyes of the hardiest veterans. Full of seduction for the National Guard, of kindly dignity for the Swiss, of favour and liberality to her friends, she became, in passing along the ranks of the gentlemen assembled in the great gallery, the object of chivalric devotion. Some asked her hand, to kiss; others besought her only to touch their weapons; they threw their cloaks beneath her, the Princess Royal, and Dauphin's feet; and others again, more familiar, raised the child in their arms above their heads—living standard—for whom they swore to perish.

At these transports the Queen became excited

herself. Seizing two pistols from the belt of M. d' Affry, commandant of the Swiss guards, she presents them to the King: "Now is the instant to show yourself, or to perish with glory in the midst of your friends," she exclaimed. The King returned the pistols to M. d' Affry: he felt that the view of arms would unpopularise him, and that his best defence in the eyes of the citizens was his inviolability and the law.

[Under the unfortunate but honest advice of Rœderer, and after the massacre of Mailly, commandant of the National Guards, (who, loyally inclined, had made every preparation for the defence of the palace, and being summoned away to the Hôtel de Ville, pleaded the orders of Péthion, the mayor, and one of the conspirators, as his excuse for fortifying the Tuilleries against the people,) the King and his family, under the pledge and assurance of personal safety, passed from the Tuilleries to the House of the Assembly, where, seated in the reporters' box, they had the horror of hearing, from without, the attack on their residence, in all its frightful details, the destruction of their friends and defenders; while, within, they had perhaps the no less pain of hearing the discussion as to their own fate and disposition. And yet, singular to say, Louis, to the great pain and mortification of his wife, called for meat and drink, and thus in public, while the knell of an empire's fall, and of his own and his family's death was ringing in his ears, coolly eat his dinner, as if nothing were happening; thereby affording his enemies a handle to reiterate their assertions of the Monarch's inability to curb his sensual appe*tites, and his consequent* unfitness for his station. The

Queen, or the children even, shared not in such unseasonable hunger.]

The Queen had been sustained in the beginning by the hope of the defeat of the insurrection. Roused like a hero by the noise of the cannon, intrepid against the vociferations of the petitioners, and of the tribunes, her look braved them, her contemptuous lip covered them with contempt; she turned, without ceasing, with looks of intelligence, towards the officers of her guard, who filled the bottom of the lodge and the passage, to ask news of the chateau of the Swiss, the forces remaining, the situation of the dear persons she had left behind at the Tuileries, and especially of her friend the Princess de Lamballe.

She had heard, while trembling with indignation, but without flinching, the massacre of Suleau, in the court of the Feuillants, the assassin's cries of rage, the musketry of the battalions at the doors of the Assembly, the tumultuous assaults of the people to force the entrance of the passage, and come to immolate herself. So long as the combat had lasted she had felt all the agitation and the fury of it. At the last echo of the guns, at the people's cries of victory, at the sight of her caskets, her jewels, her portfolios, all her secrets displayed and profaned under her eyes, the very spoils of her person and her heart, she had fallen *into an immovable* but haughty despondency.

She swallowed her defeat,—she did not accept
like the King. Her rank was part of herself:
abdicate was to die. The decree of suspensi
pronounced by Vergniaud had been the axe at h
neck. She closed her eyes a moment, and appear
to gird herself up in her humiliation: then t
pride of her misfortune flashed on her brow lik
new diadem. She summoned all her strength
elevate herself by contempt of their blows, abc
her enemies: she did not feel them more than t
others.

[From dethronement to the prison, was but a sh
step, and the inviolability of the King's person o
infringed, the whole danger of having so grea
captive was apparent, and, as in Charles I.'s case, v
at least as much the cause of his death as any insa
thirst for his blood. It must have been as mucl
question of expediency as of cruelty, although I am
aware that any writer has looked at it in that lig
The crimes of the leaders and the populace were
immense, that any motive but sheer wickedness see
quite forgotten. The Mountain mooted the Kin
death, and the Girondins, after a protracted resi
ance, unexpectedly—and probably with a view
maintaining their own ascendancy by humouring t
popular cry on such a point—gave way, and voted
death. This infirmity of purpose availed them nothi
serving only to expose their weakness, and to p
cipitate their ruin and death.

Louis XVI. was, accordingly, after the usual mc
trial, separated from his family, and there carrying
those religious principles, and the piety which h
been always a very marked feature in his charac

died in peace, and with forgiveness to his enemies, the expiatory victim of his ancestors' misgovernment and disregard of moral obligation.]

The Queen requested permission from her gaoler to pay the last mark of respect to her husband's memory, by wearing mourning. This request was granted, but on condition of simplicity and parsimony, which resembled a sumptuary law on grief. By another special deliberation, the council of the commune also granted fifteen shirts to the King's son.

Some relaxations in the rigour of the interior captivity of the Princesses followed the King's death. During the first moments, the commissaries of the Temple thought themselves that the Republic, satisfied, would speedily set children and women at liberty. Some indulgent municipals permitted this possibility to glimmer in their words. Madame Elizabeth and the young Princess endeavoured to make it penetrate into the Queen's mind, if not as a hope, at all events, as a diversion to her tears: but the Queen continued insensible to them: whether that she did not believe in the return to humanity of a people that had pushed their resentment to the scaffold, for a once loved King, or that liberty, without her throne and her husband, appeared less desirable than death.

The 31st May, the Princesses heard the distant

murmur of the insurrections which ruined the Girondins. They did not know, until several days after, the fall of these men, which, in place of delivering them, was going to engulph them more rapidly in their death. Hébert and Chaumette came from time to time, to feed on the spectacle of their misery, sometimes insolent, at other times appeased, according to the anger or moderation of the populace. Toulan, Lepître, and their accomplices,* had been denounced by Tison's wife, who waited on the Queen. They were put to death. That woman, troubled by remorse, lost her reason, threw herself at the feet of the Queen, implored her pardon, and for several days disturbed the prison with her cries, and delirium. The Princesses forgetting, in her repentance and insanity, the treachery of this wretched creature, watched her by turns, and even deprived themselves of their own food, to relieve her.

After the 31st May, the terror that reigned in France penetrated even the dungeon, and gave to men, proposals, and measures, a character of the most odious rigour and persecution. Every municipal proved his patriotism, by aggravating the severity of his predecessor.

The Convention, after decreeing that the Queen

* These men had been plotting the Queen's rescue, and communicated with her through an emissary in the jail, who put notes in the chimney of the stove that heated their room. These letters were found by Tison's wife, and given up.

should be tried, ordered her separation from her son. They wished to read this order to the Royal Family. The child threw himself into his mother's arms, beseeching her not to abandon him to his tormentor. The Queen set her son on her bed, and placing herself between him and the municipals, declared that they should kill her on the spot, rather than approach him. Menaced in vain with violence, if she continued to resist the decree, she struggled for two hours, even to perfect exhaustion, against the injunctions, the threats, insults, and gestures of the commissioners. At last, falling from fatigue, at the foot of the bed, and persuaded by Mad. Elizabeth and her daughter, she dressed the Dauphin, and handed him bathed in her tears, to the gaolers. The shoe-maker, Simon, chosen for the brutality of his manners, to replace a mother's heart, carried the Dauphin off into the room, where this young king was fated to end his days.* The child remained for forty-eight hours lying on the floor, without taking food. No entreaty

* The generally-received belief is, that the Dauphin actually died in prison, worn out in mind and body, by the ill-treatment of the wretch who guarded him. But the *soi-disant* Duke of Normandy, long time resident in this country, asserts, and brings forward a variety of proofs in support of his claim, that he is the real Dauphin; and the attempts said to have been made, more than once, even in England, on his life, were alleged to proceed from high quarters, interested in so getting rid of a troublesome claimant.—Tr.

of the Queen could obtain from the commune the favour of merely a single interview with her son. Fanaticism had killed nature. The bolts were drawn night and day, on the apartment of the Princesses; the municipals appeared there no longer; only turn-keys came up three times a day, to bring food and inspect the gratings of the windows. No waiting-woman had replaced Tison's wife, now that she was shut up in a lunatic asylum; Mad. Elizabeth, and the young Princess made the beds, swept up the room, and waited on the Queen. Their only consolation was, to go-up every day on the platform of their tower, at the hour the Dauphin took his walk on his, and to watch their opportunity to exchange looks with him, during their promenades. The Queen passed the whole of her time with her eyes fixed to a cleft in the *jalousie*, between the battlements, trying to catch a glimpse of the shadow of her son's body, and to hear his voice.

Tison, whom his wife's remorse and madness had softened, came from time to time, stealthily, to inform Mad. Elizabeth of the Dauphin's condition and health. The Princess only half repeated to the Queen the cruel information she thus received. The cynicism and brutality of Simon were depraving the body and soul of his pupil: he called him the wolf-cub of the Temple. He treated him as they treat the young of wild animals, surprised from the

mother, and condemned to captivity, at once intimidated by blows, and enervated by their keeper's taming. He punished sensibility, in rewarding baseness and encouraging vice. He was teaching the child to insult the memory of his father, the tears of his mother, the piety of his aunt, the innocence of his sisters, and fidelity of his partisans. He was made to sing obscene songs in honour of the Republic, the *lanterne** and scaffold. Often drunk, Simon diverted himself with sneers at fortune, which gratified his baseness; he made him serve at table, the child standing, he sitting. One day, in cruel sport, he was near cutting the Dauphin's eye out, by slashing him across the face with his napkin. Another time, he seized an andiron from the hearth, and held it over the young Prince's head, threatening to knock him down with it; more frequently he was mild with him, feigning to compassionate his age and misfortune, in order to attract his confidence, and report his intentions to Hébert and Chaumette. "Capet," said he, one day, at the moment the Vendéan

* The *lanterne*, or lamp, was, in those days, suspended in the middle of the street, by a cord from the opposite houses, and was a most convenient mode of hanging an aristocrat, —an honour which Talleyrand was on the point of receiving once, and only escaped by a prompt witticism, which gained the laughter of his executioners, and his own life. Camille Desmoulins wrote songs to the *lanterne*, dwelling, with infinite *gusto*, on the sufferings of the victims.

army was passing the Loire, "if the Vendéans deliver you, what will you do?" "I would pardon you." Even Simon was touched by this answer, and recognized the blood of Louis XVI. But this man, distraught by the pride of his importance, by fanaticism and wine, was susceptible neither of a constant ferocity, nor of a durable mildness. It was crapulence and brutality, directed by fate to debase, and denaturalize the last germ of royalty.

In sixty days ninety executions had dyed the scaffold with blood. Once the axe of terror placed in the hands of the people, it could not be withdrawn; and now, implacable and cowardly revenge unceasingly demanded the head of Marie Antoinette. The blind unpopularity of that unfortunate Princess had even survived her fault and her disappearance. She was, in the ideas of the hard-hearted people, the counter-revolution in chains, but still the counter-revolution alive. In immolating Louis XVI., the people well knew they had only slain the hand. The *heart* of the court was, to the enemies of royalty, in Marie Antoinette. In their eyes Louis XVI. was the person of royalty, his wife was its crime. Already, for some days, the council of the commune resounded with significant accusations against those of the commissaries of the commune who showed the prisoners of the Temple any regard or pity. Insolence and outrage were enjoined on them as a virtue. The exhumations from the sepulchre of St. Denis,

ordered by the Convention on the injunctions of the commune, were the dispersal of even the ashes of Kings. How spare royal persons still breathing in the middle of Paris? It seemed to the pitiless Jacobins that the atmosphere of the Republic would be calmed and purified by that blood so odious to them. The committee of public safety ordered Fouquier Tinville to hurry on the trial.

The 2nd August, at two in the morning, the Queen was aroused, to hear the decree ordering her translation to the Conciergerie until the process against her was perfected. She listened to the reading of the order, without evincing astonishment or grief; and, amid the tears and entreaties of her sister and daughter, she was obliged to dress herself before the men, who filled the apartment. They searched her, and put a seal on the little objects and the trinkets she carried about her. They left her only a handkerchief and her smelling-bottle, to recover her from fainting, should she succumb to the emotion of her departure. The Queen throwing her arms about her daughter, drew her aside into the corner of the room, and covering her with her tears and blessings, bid her a last farewell. She recommended the same pardon of their enemies, and oblivion of persecutions, which Louis XVI., dying, had recommended: she put the young girl's hands into Mad. Elizabeth's, "she will henceforth be your father and your mother; obey

her, and love her, as if she were myself. And you too, my sister, in you I leave another mother to my poor children; love them as you have loved us, even to the dungeon and to death."

The Conciergerie is under the vast structure of the Palais de Justice, of which it is the basement; and its gigantic substructure serves for foundation to the lofty quadrangular tower, from whence were deduced all the fiefs of the kingdom. This tower was the centre of the monarchy; thus it is under the very palace of feudality, that the vengeance or the derision of fate shut up the agony of the monarchy, and the death of feudalism. Who would have told the kings of the first races, that in this palace they were building the prison and the tomb of their successors? Time is the grand expiator of human affairs. But alas! it takes blind revenge, and, with the blood and tears of a woman, victim of the throne, wipes out the wrongs and oppressions of a line of twenty kings!

On decending a flight of steps, and passing through two large gates, you enter a cloister, the arcades of which open on a court, the prisoners' promenade. A row of rough-planed oak doors, fastened with bands, links, and massive bolts, runs along the left of this corridor. The second of these doors going from the wickets, gives admission to a little under-ground room, the

level of which is three steps below the corridor. A grated window borrowed light from a narrow deep court, like an empty cistern. To the left of this first cell, a still lower door than the first, but without bars and bolts, gives admittance to a kind of vaulted sepulchre, barred and walled with flags, blackened by the smoke of torches, and eaten with the damp. A small window opening on the same square as the anti-chamber, and furnished with an iron trellis, allowed a constant twilight to make its way in. At the bottom of this cellar, on the side opposite the window, a wretched truckle bed, without tester or curtains, with coarse blankets, like those used in hospitals and barracks, a little deal table, a wooden box, and two straw chairs, comprised all the furniture. Into this, at dead of night, and by the light of a tallow candle, they flung the Queen of France, descending step by step, misfortune by misfortune, from Versailles and Trianon, to this dungeon at last. Two gendarmes, with drawn sabres, were placed on guard in the first chamber, with open door, whose orders were, never to lose sight of the Queen, even in sleep.

Nevertheless, the ferocity of men cannot always find equally implacable instruments; even a cell may have its touches of feeling. A respectful motion, a look of intelligence, a sympathetic tone of voice, a furtive word, make the victim understand that he is not entirely sequestrated.

from humanity. The Queen found, in t countenance and heart of Mad. Richard t keeper's wife, that sensibility concealed under th rigour of her duties. The hand condemned t bruise her, was the one to smooth her path. A the alleviations permitted by the arbitrary law of a prison were tried by Mad. Richard, to prov to her prisoner that, even in the depths of her misfortune, she still reigned in the pity and devotion of one heart.

Madame Richard, royalist by recollections, felt far less of pride in keeping the daughter, wife, and mother of kings at her mercy, than of happiness in her ability to dry a tear. She introduced into the cell some furniture, necessary or agreeable to the Queen. She sent to the Temple for the embroidery frame, the worsted, and needles, that Marie Antoinette had left there. These works, by occupying her hands, served to divert her grief. Mad. Richard herself prepared the prisoner's food, and would come every instant under pretext of her duty to recommend watchfulness to the gendarmes on guard, to inform herself of the captive's wants, to drop a few words of information or hope, and to distract her solitude by day, and sleeplessness by night. She brought news of her sister and children, which she was able to procure by her connexion with the Temple, and, by the intervention of the accomplice commissioners, transmitted news of her captive



back to the other prisoners. The keeper Richard, although more rude in appearance, the better to disguise his complicity, shared in all his wife's sentiments and took part in this lenity.

The delay in the trial gave hopes that the committee of public safety were desirous of deceiving the ferocious impatience of the populace, or of wearing it out. Several of the municipals were dabbling in plots of escape. Mad. Richard favoured the introduction of these devoted men into the cell. She occupied the attention of the gendarmes, in the anti-chamber, during these conversations. Michonis, member of the municipality, and administrator of police, who had been devoted to the royal family in the Temple, at the peril of his life continued the same devotion at the Conciergerie. There are generous natures whom misfortune seduces, and danger attracts. Michonis was of the number, like Lepître and Toulan.

Thanks to Michonis, a royalist gentleman named Rougeville, was introduced into the prison, saw the Queen, and offered her a flower, containing a note. This note spoke of deliverance, and was surprised in the Queen's hands, by one of the gendarmes. Michonis was arrested, Mad. Richard and her husband, torn from their duty, were thrown into the dungeon, into which they had permitted indulgence to enter. The Queen trembled.

But this time, again a generous heart softened the outrages that Hébert and Chaumette commanded to be inflicted on their victim. The woman's hand was not to be found, that could lend itself as an instrument of torture against another woman, born so high and fallen so low.

They had been thinking of giving to the ferocious Simon the post of gaoler. M. and Mad. Bault, the old keepers of La Force, solicited and obtained the appointment, with the intention of ameliorating the captivity, and of consoling the last hours of their former mistress. The Princess, who had protected them in the time of her omnipotence, was rejoiced to meet again familiar faces and friendly hearts.

Mad. Bault, in defiance of the orders of the commune, which enjoined her only to give the Queen the usual bread and water of prisoners, prepared her food herself. In place of the fetid Seine water, she had the pure water of Arcueil brought, —the same the Queen used to drink at Trianon. The fruit and flower-dealers of the Halle, who had formerly served the royal family, brought by stealth to the wicket, melons, peaches, and bouquets, which the jailoress transmitted to her prisoner, as a testimony of fidelity, in the humblest conditions of life. The interior of the dungeon thus conveyed to the captive some traces of the usage and fragrance of those gardens she *had so much loved.* Mad. Bault, to affect more

rigour and incorruptibility in her surveillance, never entered the Princess's room: her husband alone appeared there, accompanied by some administrators of police. These functionaries, one day perceiving that an old carpet had been hung between the bed and the wall, to make the place a little more wholesome, attacked Bault for this tolerance, which, according to them, smacked of the courtier. Bault pretended the wall had been thus hung to deaden the echo, and to prevent her sighs from being heard by the other captives.

The humidity of the soil was rotting the only two gowns the Queen still possessed, one white, the other black, which she wore alternately. Her three chemises, her shoes and stockings, constantly saturated with moisture, were in the same state. Mad. Bault's daughter mended these garments, and secretly distributed the shreds and pieces which came off, as relics. This young girl, introduced every morning to the dungeon, and, by her grace and gaiety, softening the roughness of the gendarmes, helped the Queen to dress, and to make her bed. She also did the prisoner's hair, which, formerly so thick and blonde, was now turning white, and falling off a head, only thirty-seven years old, as though nature had prescience of the shortness of her days.

The Queen, by the aid of her needle, wrote

the ideas she wished to retain, on the wall. One of the commissioners, who visited her chamber after her trial, copied some of these inscriptions. The majority of them were verses of German or Italian,—allusions to her fate. Glorious and touching destiny of poets, to lend their voices to all the happiness and misfortune of life! as if no felicity or misery were complete, without being expressed in that language of immortality!

The other inscriptions were verses of the Imitation,* the Psalms, or the Gospel. The wall opposite the window was covered with them. They were pages of stone, in the book of her passion. The commissioner wanted, one day, to copy them: but the inflexibility of his colleagues had them instantly covered over with a coat of white-wash, lest these groans of a queen should have an echo in the Republic.

These gentle mollifications of her captivity could never be extended so far as to modify the nakedness, darkness, and restriction of her prison. The Queen being desirous of a cotton coverlid, lighter than the heavy coarse blankets which oppressed her in sleep, Bault transmitted this request to the procureur-general of the commune. "How dare you ask it?" replied

* "The Imitation of Jesus Christ," a work by Thomas à Kempis.

Hébert, brutally, "do you want to be sent to the guillotine?"

The Queen's sensibility to these cares could not be freely expressed in the presence of the gendarmes. She once endavoured to slip a pair of gloves, and a lock of her hair, into Bault's hands. The gendarmes seized them, and carried the suspicious present to Fouquier Tinville, who gave them himself to Robespierre.

The Queen sought every means to convey to her children, or her friends, some maternal signs of the remembrance she cherished of them, even to death. She drew out, one by one, some threads of worsted from the old carpet, at the head of her bed. By the aid of two ivory tooth-picks, she knitted a garter: when it was finished, she made a sign to Bault, and let it fall at her feet. Bault, pretending to let his handkerchief fall, stooped to pick it up, and thus concealed it from the view of the gendarmes. This last and touching work, moistened with the Queen's tears, was remitted to her daughter, after her death.

The 13th October Fouquier Tinville came to her, to give her notice of his indictment. She listened to it, as a formality of death, which was unworthy the honour of being discussed. Her crime was, her being Queen, mother, and wife of a king, and of having abhorred a revolution which despoiled her of her crown, her husband, her children, and her life. To love the Revolution,

she must have hated nature, and reversed all human sentiments. Between herself and the Republic, there was no law; it was hatred, to the death. The stronger of the two would inflict it on the other. It was not justice, it was vengeance: the Queen knew it, the woman accepted it; she could not repent, and she would not supplicate.

For form, she chose two defenders, Chauveau Legarde, and Tronson Ducoudray. These advocates, young, illustrious, generous, had been secretly contriving for this honour. They sought in the solemn causes of the revolutionary tribunal, not vile fees for their words, but the applause of posterity. Nevertheless, a remnant of instinct for life, which makes even the dying seek the issue of salvation even in the impossible, occupied the Queen the remainder of the day, and the following night. She noted down some responses to the interrogatories she was about to be subjected to.

The next day she did her hair, and dressed, with all the decency permitted by the simplicity and indigence of her wardrobe. She did not affect a display of rags, which would have made the Republic blush. She did not think of appeasing the looks of the people; her dignity as woman, and as Queen, forbad her to drape herself with her misery.

In the middle of a strong squadron of gen-

darmes, she ascended the staircase to the judgement hall, passed through the sea of faces, which so solemn a vengeance had drawn together in the passages, and seated herself on the bench of the accused. Her brow, struck by the lightning of the Revolution, and injured by grief, was neither humiliated, nor cast down; her eyes, surrounded with that black circle which watchings and tears hollow out below the eyelids, like the bed of grief, still darted the lightnings of their ancient brilliancy on the faces of her enemies. No longer was the beauty seen, which had intoxicated her court, and dazzled Europe, though its traces were distinguishable. Her saddened mouth retained the curves of royal pride, ill obliterated by the curves of her long sorrows. The natural freshness of her northern complexion still contended with the livid pallor of the prisons. Her hair, blanched by anguish, contrasted with that youthfulness of countenance and figure, flowed down her neck, as a bitter and precocious derision of fate on youth and beauty. Her countenance was natural: not that of an irritated queen, insulting, from the depths of her scorn, the people who triumph over her, nor that of a suppliant interceding, by her debasement, and seeking indulgence in compassion, but that of a victim, whom long misfortunes have habituated to her condition, who has forgotten that she was a queen, and who recals only that

she is a woman, not caring to claim any portion of her vanished rank, nor to abdicate a tittle of the dignity of herself and her misfortunes.

[In the case of such a criminal, trial was death. She had been subjected, in her examination, to charges the most odious but for their very extravagance;—among others, that of debauching the mind of the Dauphin, that she might retain power over the people of France. The unhappy Queen made no reply to this brutal interrogatory, but turned round and appealed to the mothers in the court, and an immediate cry of disgust silenced the base Fouquier Tinville. She was to be conducted to execution with little delay; but she begged and obtained leave to write the following touching letter,—A voice from the dead alive.]

"To you, my sister, I write for the last time. I have just been sentenced, not to a shameful death;—that is for criminals; but to go and rejoin your brother. Innocent like him, I hope to show the same firmness as he did, in his last moments. I have a profound sorrow in abandoning my poor children: you know that I existed only for them, and for you: you, who have, in your affection, sacrificed all, to be with us. In what a position I leave you! I learnt, by the very pleadings of my indictment, that my daughter has been separated from you. Alas! poor child, I dare not write to her: she would not receive my letter; I know not even, if this will reach you. Receive my blessing,

for both of them. I hope that, one day, when they are older, they will be able to join with you, and enjoy, in liberty, your tender cares. Let them both think on what I have never ceased to inspire them with. Let their mutual affection, and their confidence, make their happiness. Let my daughter feel, that, at her age, she must always assist her brother with her counsels, which her greater experience, and her love for him, may inspire. Let my son, in turn, render to his sister all the cares and services which affection can inspire him with. Finally, let them both feel that, in whatever position they may be found, they will never be truly happy, but in unity. Let them follow our example. How much consolation has not our affection given us in our misfortunes! While in unhappiness, we enjoy doubly what we can share with a friend: where find one more tender, or more dear, than in one's own family? Let my son never forget his father's last words, which I repeat expressly for him,—*Let him not seek to avenge our death.*

"I wish to speak to you of a thing very painful to my heart. I know how much that child must have given you pain. Pardon him, my dear sister; think of his age, and how easy it is to make a child say what people wish, and even what he does not understand. A day will come, I hope, when he will only better

appreciate all the worth of your kindness and tenderness for them both. It now only remains to me to confide my last thoughts to you. I should have wished to have written them from the commencement of the indictment: but, besides that I was not permitted to write, the steps have been so rapid, that I should not really have had time. I die in the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman faith; in that of my fathers; in that I have been brought up in, and have always professed. I have no spiritual consolation to expect, not knowing if there still exist here any priests of that religion; and even the place in which I am would expose them too much, if they entered it. I sincerely ask pardon of God for all the faults I may have committed since I have been in being. I hope that, in his goodness, he will receive my last wish, as also those I have formed for some time, that He will receive my soul into his pity and goodness. I ask pardon of all I know, and of you, my sister, in particular, for all the sorrows which unwittingly I may have caused you. I pardon all my enemies the evil they have done me. I here say farewell to my aunts, and to my brothers and sisters. I had friends; the idea of being separated from them and their troubles, is one of the greatest regrets I experience in dying: let them at least know that, till my last moment, I thought of them.

Adieu, my tender, my good sister! May this letter reach you! Think always of me! In my heart, I embrace you, as well as my poor dear children. My God! how heart-rending it is to quit them for ever—Adieu! Adieu!—I may no longer occupy myself with anything but my spiritual duties. As I am not free in my actions, they will perhaps bring me a priest. But I here protest, that I will not say a word to him, and that I will treat him as an absolute stranger!"

The letter finished, she kissed each page several times, as if it had been able to convey the warmth of her lips, and the moisture of her tears to her children. She folded it without sealing it, and gave it to Bault, the keeper. He remitted it to Fouquier Tinville.

It has been said, that she received in her last moments the visit of a nonjuring priest, and the sacraments of the Catholic religion. Her death had none of those consolations, to relax or fortify her in her last struggle. This is from the lips of an eye-witness, the truthful recital of the religious circumstances which preceded the Queen's death.

The Republic, even in its most terrible fits of fury, had not entirely broken, as is believed, with God, and cut asunder all the ties which bind man with religion, and the soul with immortality. It had nationalized worship, but had not abolished either the exercise of or the remuneration of that

nationalized worship. It had preserved the ancient practices of criminal justice, the usage of sending the ministers of religion to the condemned, before execution. They were constitutional priests. The Bishop of Paris—Gobel—scrupulously superintended this charitable duty of his clergy, in the prisons. The multiplicity of the deaths had obliged him to multiply the number of the ecclesiastics who consecrated themselves to these duties. There were always at the Bishop's palace five or six priests, pious sentinels, who relieved each other in this species of funeral guard. Every time the revolutionary tribunal passed sentence of death, the president remitted the list of the condemned to Fouquier Tinville. Fouquier transmitted it to the Bishop. He instructed the priests, who distributed the prisons among themselves.

The same formality was observed in the Queen's case. Only the greatness of the victim, the horror of the mission, repugnance to ally one's name in history with any of the circumstances of this murder, which would be borne so far and wide into posterity; finally, the fear that the people's anger would not permit the cortège to reach the scaffold, and might immolate both the Queen and the minister of religion who should assist her in the cart; the certainty of finding themselves repulsed by a woman who rejected the whole Revolution, even to its prayers—rendered Gobel's

priests timid and tardy in the accomplishment of this duty for Marie Antoinette. They shifted the burthen from one to another.

Three of them, however, presented themselves during the night at the Conciergerie, and timidly offered their ministration to the Queen. One was the constitutional curate of St. Landry, Girard by name; another, one of the Bishop's vicars; the third, an Alsacian priest, Lothringer. The Queen received them rather as the heralds of the executioner than as the precursors of Christ. The schism with which they were stained was, in her eyes, one of the disgraces of the Republic. However, the consideration of their attitude and of their words touched the Queen. She gave to her refusals an expression of gratitude and of regret. "I thank you," she said, addressing Abbé Girard; "I thank you, but my religion forbids me to receive the pardon of God by the voice of a priest of another than the Roman communion. Perhaps I have great need of one," she added, with a sad and gentle humility, confessing itself before the man, and not before the priest, "for I am a great sinner. But I am about to take a great sacrament." "Yes—Martyrdom," replied the Curé of St. Landry, in alow voice; and, bowing, withdrew.

Abbé Lambert, a young man of noble figure, of stature more military than sacerdotal, of pure republicanism and sincere faith, although troubled

by the storms of the time, kept himself respectfully at a distance, and in the rear of his two brethren. He contemplated in silence this heart-rending expiation of royalty by a woman, and went out astonished at the tears that gushed from his eyes.

The Abbé Lothringer persevered in his charity, in a fashion more akin to a siege than to a holy office. He was a man pious by conviction, officious at heart, of limited intelligence, and regarding priesthood as a trade. He exercised it with a restless and vain zeal, dismissing as many of the condemned as possible in their cells, and spying out the return of a thought to God to the very foot of all the scaffolds. Such was the sole consoler Providence gave in her last hours to the woman who, of all the earth, had most need of being consoled.

None of the importunate solicitations of Abbé Lothringer could bend the Queen, and make her kneel at his feet. She prayed alone, and confessed only to God. She had not the calm and lively faith of her husband, to support her in her last hour. Her soul was more impassioned than pious. The atmosphere of the eighteenth century which she had respired, the worldly distractions of her habits, and, at a later period, the cares of the throne and the political intrigues, had often made her religion evaporate from her heart, too open to the winds of the world for her to preserve ever present the thoughts of God. Religion had

long been, for her, only a public decency, an etiquette of royalty, the degradation of which humiliated the court, and weakened the throne. She had not found it until the depth and abyss of her disgrace. The example of faith of Louis XVI. and his sister had acted like a pious contagion on her soul. But this faith of imitation and desire had never perhaps reached that state of security and beatitude which changes darkness into light, and death into apotheosis. Only Marie Antoinette was resolved to die as a Christian, as her husband had died, and as the angelic sister she was leaving for a mother to her children was living. This sister had secretly procured her a consolation, which her piety deemed essential to salvation. It was the number and the floor of a house in the Rue St. Honoré, before which the condemned used to pass, and in which a Catholic priest was to be, on the day and hour of the execution, to give her from above, and unknown to the people, God's absolution and benediction. The Queen trusted to this invisible sacrament, to die in the faith of her race, and in reconciliation with heaven.

The Queen, after writing and praying, slept calmly for some hours. At her awakening Madame Bault's daughter dressed her, and did her hair with more decency and respect for her exterior than on other days. Marie Antoinette put off the black gown she had worn since the death of her husband, and dressed herself in a white one.

as a sign of innocence on earth, and joy in heaven. A white kerchief covered her shoulders, a white cap her head. A black ribbon alone, which pressed the cap on her temples, recalled her mourning to the world, her widowhood to herself, and her slaughter to the people.

The windows and parapets, the roofs and trees, were loaded with spectators. A crowd of women, mobbing *the Austrian*, pressed around the gates, and almost into the courts. A cold dull autumn fog was floating over the Seine, allowing here and there a gleam of sunshine to fall on the roofs of the Louvre and on the tower of the Palais. At eleven, the gendarmes and the executioner entered the hall of the condemned. The Queen embraced the keeper's daughter, cut off her hair herself, and offered her hands to be bound without a murmur: she then went into the Conciergerie with a firm step. No womanly weakness, no faltering at heart, no trembling, no paleness of countenance. Nature obeyed will, and lent her all her life, to die like a queen.

In turning from the staircase into the court, she perceived the cart of the condemned, towards which the gendarmes were directing her steps. She stopped short, as if to turn back, and made a movement of surprise and horror. She had thought that at least the people would show decency in their hatred, and that she would be taken to the scaffold, like the King, in a close carriage.

This emotion suppressed, she bowed the head, as in sign of acceptance, and mounted the cart. The Abbé Lothringer placed himself in it, behind her, despite her refusal.

The procession proceeded from the Conciergerie, in the midst of cries of "*Vive la Republique!*" "*Room for the Austrian!*" "*Room for the Widow Capet!*" "*Down with tyranny!*" The Comedian Grammont, Rousin's aide-de-camp, gave the example, and the signal of these cries to the people, brandishing his naked sabre, and clearing the crowd with his horse's chest. The tied hands of the Queen deprived her of any support against the shocks of the pavements. She had much trouble to keep her balance, and to preserve the dignity of her attitude. "Those are none of your cushions at Trianon!" shrieked the infamous creatures. The voices, the looks of the people, steeped her in humiliation. Her cheeks passed constantly from purple to paleness, and revealed the revulsions of her blood. Notwithstanding the care she had taken of her toilette, the disrepair of her dress, the coarse linen, the common stuff, the rumpled folds, dishonoured her rank. The curls of her hair escaped from her cap, and fluttered about her face in the puffs of the wind. Her red and swollen though dry eyes revealed the long floods of grief, exhausted of tears. Now and then she would bite her lower lip, as if to suppress the cry of sharp suffering.

When they had crossed the Pont-au-Change, and the tumultuous quarters of Paris, the silence and the serious countenance of the crowd indicated another region of the population. If it was not pity, there was at least consternation. Her countenance resumed the calm and uniformity of expression, that the outrages of the mob had troubled at the first moment. She traversed slowly the whole length of the Rue St. Honoré. The priest, at her side, endeavoured in vain to call her attention by words, which she seemed to repulse from her ear. Her glance wandered, with all its intelligence, over the fronts of the houses, over the republican inscriptions, the costumes and physiognomy of that capital, so transformed for her, during sixteen months of captivity. Above all, she examined the windows of the higher floors, from whence floated the tri-coloured flags, emblems of patriotism.

The people thought, and witnesses have written, that her light and puerile attention was attracted by this external decoration of republicanism. Her thoughts were elsewhere. Her eye was seeking the signs of her salvation among these signs of her ruin. She was approaching the house indicated to her in her cell. She was looking for the window from which was to descend on her head the absolution of a disguised priest. A gesture, inexplicable to the crowd, made her acknowledge it, when she closed her eyes, bowed

her face, gathered herself together under the invisible hand that was blessing her; and, unable to make use of her tied hands, she made the sign of the cross on her breast by three movements of her head. The spectators thought she was praying inwardly, and respected her self-examination. An inward joy, and secret consolation, shone from that instant on her visage.

In making way to the Place de la Revolution, the leaders of the procession made the cart approach the Turning Bridge, as near as possible, and made it halt a moment before the entrance to the garden of the Tuilleries. Marie Antoinette turned her head towards the side of her ancient palace, and regarded, for some instants, that theatre, at once dear and hateful, of her greatness and her fall. Some tears fell on her knees. All the past appeared to her at the hour of death. A few more turns of the wheels brought her to the foot of the guillotine. The priest and executioner assisted her to ascend, supporting her by the elbows. She ascended the steps of the platform with majesty. On arriving on the scaffold, she inadvertently stepped on the executioner's foot. The man uttered a cry of pain. "Pardon me!" she said to the executioner, with the same tone of voice she had been wont to use to her courtiers. She knelt an instant, and murmured a prayer: then rising, "Farewell, once more, my children," she said, fixing her eyes on the towers of the

Temple. "I go to meet your father." She did not, like Louis XVI., attempt to justify herself before the people, or to affect them for her memory. Her features did not wear, like those of her husband, the impress of anticipated beatitude with the just man and the martyr; but that of disdain of men, and of just impatience to quit life. She did not rush toward heaven; she spurned earth, and, in going, bequeathed remorse and her indignation.

The headsman, more trembling than she, was seized with a shudder, which made his hand hesitate in loosing the axe. The Queen's head fell. The attendant took it by the hair, and made the tour of the scaffold, raising it in his right hand, and showing it to the people. One long cry of "*Vive la Republique!*" saluted the decapitated face, already at rest.

Thus died a queen, light in prosperity, sublime in adversity, intrepid on the scaffold, idol of the court, mutilated by the people, long time the love, then the reckless counsel, of royalty, and personal enemy of the Revolution,—that Revolution which the Queen knew how neither to foresee, nor to comprehend, nor to accept; only how to irritate and to fear.

History, whatever its opinion, will shed immortal evergreens on her scaffold. Alone against all, innocent by her sex, sacred by her title of

mother, a woman in future harmless, is immolated on a foreign soil, by a people who can pardon nothing to youth, beauty, to the vertigo of adoration! Summoned by the people to fill a throne, this same people would not even give her a tomb; for we read on the register of common burials in the Madeleine,—"*For the bier of Widow Capet, 7 francs.*"

Behold the sum of a queen's life, and of those enormous amounts expended during a reign prodigal in the splendour, pleasure, and generosity of a woman who had owned Versailles, Saint Cloud, and Trianon. When Providence wishes to speak to men with rude eloquence on the vicissitudes of kings, it says in a sign more than Seneca and Bossuet do in their elaborate discourses, and it inscribes a vile cipher on a grave-digger's register.

MADAME ROLAND

Was born in that condition between the labourer and the tradesman, in which men retain the virtues and simplicity of the people, yet participate in the lights of society. The sap of the people is there. In this, Jean Jacques Rousseau, the male type of Madame Roland, was born. A portrait of her represents a young girl in her father's workshop, holding in one hand a book, and in the other an engraving-tool;—the symbolical definition of the social condition in which she was born.

Her father, Gratien Phiippon, was an engraver, and painter in enamel; he traded also in diamonds and jewels. He was a man always aspiring higher than his abilities allowed, and a restless speculator, who incessantly destroyed his modest fortune, in his efforts to extend it. He adored his daughter, and could not, for her sake, content himself with the prospects of the workshop. He gave her an education of the highest class, and Nature had conferred upon her a heart for the most elevated

destinies. We need not say what dreams, misery, and misfortunes, men with such characters invariably bring upon their honest families.

The young girl grew up in this atmosphere of imaginative luxury and actual wretchedness; endowed with a precocious judgment, she early detected these domestic miseries, and took refuge in the good sense and angelic piety of her mother, from the illusions of her father, and her own presentiments of the future.

A tall and pliant figure, flat shoulders, a prominent bust, raised by a free and strong respiration, a modest and most becoming demeanour, that carriage of the neck which bespeaks intrepidity, black and soft hair, blue eyes, which appeared brown in the depth of their reflection, a look which, like her soul, passed rapidly from tenderness to energy, the nose of a Grecian statue, a rather large mouth, opened by a smile as well as by speech, splendid teeth, a turned and well-rounded chin gave to the oval of her features that voluptuous and feminine grace, without which even beauty does not elicit love: a skin marbled with the animation of life, and veined by blood which the least impression sent mounting to her cheeks, a tone of voice which borrowed its vibrations from the deepest fibres of her heart, and which was deeply modulated to its finest movements, (a precious gift, for the tone of the voice, which is the channel of emotion in a woman, is the medium of persuasion in the orator,

and by both these titles Nature owed her the charm of voice, and had bestowed it on her freely.) Such, at eighteen years of age, was the portrait of this young girl, whom obscurity long kept in the shade, as if to prepare for life or death a soul more strong, and a victim more perfect.

The intellect enlightened this beautiful framework with a precocious and flashing intelligence, which was already inspiration. She acquired, as it were, the most difficult accomplishments, even from looking into their very elements. What is taught to her age and sex was not sufficient. The masculine education of men was a necessity and a sport to her.* Her powerful mind had need of all the means of thought for its due exercise. Theology, history, philosophy, music, painting, and dancing, the exact sciences, chemistry, foreign tongues and learned languages,—she learned all and desired more. She herself formed her ideas from all the rays which the obscurity of her condition allowed to penetrate into the the laboratory of her father. She even secreted the books which the young apprentices brought and forgot for her, in the workshop. Jean Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu, and the English philosophers, fell into her hands: but her real food was Plutarch.

"I shall never forget," said she, "the Lent of 1763, during which I every day carried that book

* And would be ever as much so as to men, were women *only habituated to it.*—TR.

to church, instead of the book of prayers: it was from this moment that I date the impressions and ideas which made me republican, when I had never formed a thought on the subject."

Although her mother was very pious, she did not forbid her daughter from reading. She wished to inspire her with religion, and not enforce it upon her. A servile, not voluntary religion, appeared to her degradation and slavery, which God could not accept as a tribute worthy of Him. The pensive mind of her daughter naturally tended towards the great objects of eternal happiness or misery; and she was sure, at an earlier age than any other, to plunge deeply into their mysteries. At an early age she entered a convent, the common medium of female education in most Catholic countries, where the mysterious and solemn rites of religion, the tranquillity of the cloister, and the contemplative serenity of her existence, heightened the enthusiastic and thoughtful turn of her mind.

The charm and custom of the religious feelings there acquired were never effaced from her mind. Philosophy, which soon became her worship, dissipated her faith, however, but left the impressions it had created. She could not assist at the ceremonies of a worship whose mysteries her reason had repudiated, without feeling attraction and respect for them. The sight of weak men united to adore and pray to the Father of the human race, *affected* her sensibly. The music raised her to the

skies. She quitted these Christian temples happier and better; so much are the recollections of infancy reflected and prolonged, even in the most troubled existence.

Her father, who liked her lofty studies, and was flattered by his daughter's success, was still desirous of initiating her in his own craft, and made her begin to engrave. She learned to handle the burin, and succeeded in this as in everything else. She did not derive any emolument from it; but at her grandfather's and grandmother's fêtes she presented to them as her offering, sometimes a head, which she had applied herself to execute for this express purpose, sometimes a small plate, highly polished, on which she had engraved emblems of flowers; and they, in return, gave her ornaments or something for her toilette, for which she confesses always to have been anxious.

This taste, natural to her age and sex, did not, however, distract her from the more humble domestic duties. She was not ashamed, after appearing on Sundays at church, or walking out elegantly dressed, to put on, during the week, a cotton gown, and go to market with her mother. She used even to go out to shops in the neighbourhood to buy parsley or salad, which had been forgotten. Although she felt herself somewhat humiliated by these domestic cares, which brought her down from the eminence of her Plutarch, and *her visionary wanderings*, she combined so much

grace, and so much natural dignity, that the fruit woman used to take pleasure in serving her before her other customers; and the first comers took no offence at this preference. This young girl, this future Hélöise of the eighteenth century, who read serious books, who expounded the circles of the celestial sphere, handled the pencil and burin, and in whose soul, aspiring thoughts and impassioned feelings already found space, was often called into the kitchen to prepare the vegetables for dinner. This mixture of serious studies, elegant research, and domestic occupations, ordained by her mother's sagacity, seemed to prepare her already for the vicissitudes of fortune, and in after days helped her to support them. It was Rousseau at Charmettes, piling up the wood-stack of Madame de Warens, with the hand which was to write the *Contrat Social*, or Philopœmen, chopping his wood.

From the retirement of such secluded life, she sometimes perceived the higher world which shone above her. The lights which displayed to her this great world offended, more than they dazzled her sight. The pride of this aristocratic society, which saw without valuing her, weighed on her sensitive mind: a society in which her position was not assigned to her, seemed badly framed. It was less envy than justice, that revolted in her. Superior beings have their places marked out by *Nature*, and everything that keeps them from occu-

pying them seems to them an usurpation. They find society frequently the reverse of nature, and take their revenge by despising it; from this arises the hatred of genius against power. Genius dreams of an order of things, in which the ranks should be marked out by Nature and virtue; whilst in reality they are almost always derived from birth—that blind allotment of fate. There are few great minds which do not feel in their earliest progress the persecution of fortune, and who do not begin by an internal revolt against society. They are only quieted by their own discouragement. Some are resigned, from a more lofty feeling, to the place which God assigns to them. To put up with the world humbly, is still more beautiful than to controul it. This is the very acme of virtue. Religion leads to it in a day; philosophy only conducts to it by a lengthened life, misery or death. There are days when the most elevated place in the world is a scaffold.

The young maiden, once conducted by her grandmother to an aristocratic house, of which her humble parents were free, was deeply hurt at the tone of condescending superiority with which her grandmother and herself were treated. "My pride took alarm," she writes; "my blood boiled more than usual, and I blushed violently. I no longer inquired of myself, why the lady was seated on a sofa, and my grandmother on a low stool; but my feelings led to such reflections, and

I saw the end of the visit with satisfaction, as if a weight were taken off my mind."

Another time, she was taken to spend a week at Versailles, in the palace of that King and Queen, whose throne she was one day to undermine. Lodged in the attics, with one of the female domestics of the chateau, she was a close observer of this royal luxury, which she believed was paid for by the misery of the people, and that grandeur of things founded on the servility of courtiers. The lavishly-spread tables, the walks, the play, presentations,—all passed before her eyes in the pomp and vanity of the world. These ceremonious details of power were repugnant to her mind, which fed on philosophy, truth, liberty, and the virtue of the olden time. The obscure names, the humble attire, of the relatives who took her to see all this, only procured for her mere passing looks and a few words, which meant more protection than favour. The feeling that her youth, beauty, and merit were unperceived by this crowd, who only adored favour or etiquette, oppressed her mind. The philosophy, natural pride, imagination, and fixedness of her soul were all wounded during this sojourn.

Thus the imagination, character and studies of this girl prepared her, unknown to herself, for the Republic. Her religion alone, then so powerful over her, restrained her within the bounds of that resignation which submits the thoughts to

the will of God. But philosophy became her creed; and this creed formed a portion of her politics. The emancipations of the people united itself, in her mind, with the emancipation of ideas. She believed, by overturning thrones, that she was working for man; and by overthrowing altars, that she was labouring for God. Such is the confession which she herself made of her change.

Meantime the young girl had attracted many suitors for her hand. Her father wished to marry her in the class to which he himself belonged. He loved, esteemed commerce, because he considered it the source of wealth. His daughter despised it; because it was, in her eyes, the source of avarice and the food of cupidity. Men in this walk of life were objectionable to her. She desired, in a husband, ideas and feelings sympathising with her own. Her idea was, a soul, and not a fortune.

Deprived of her mother by an early death, alone in the house of a father, where disorder was the consequence of a second amour, melancholy gained possession of her mind, though it did not overcome it. She became more collected and reserved, in order to strengthen her feelings against isolation and misfortune. The perusal of the Hélöise of Rousseau, which was lent to her about that time, made on her heart the same impression that Plutarch had made on her mind. Plutarch had shown her liberty; Rousseau made

her dream of happiness: the one fortified, the other weakened her. She found the earnest desire of pouring forth her feelings. Melancholy was her rigid muse. She began to write, in order to console herself in the nurture of her own thoughts. Without any intention of becoming an authoress, she acquired, by these solitary trials, that eloquence with which she subsequently animated her friends.

Thus this patient and resolute mind, working on towards its destiny, was gradually ripening, when she believed she had found the man of the olden time of whom she had so long dreamed. This man was Roland de la Platière.

Roland, born of an honest tradesman's family, which had held magisterial offices, and laid claims to nobility, was the last of five brothers. He was intended for the Church. To avoid this destiny, which disgusted him, he quitted, at nineteen years of age, his father's roof, and took refuge at Nantes. Procuring a situation with a ship-builder, he was about to embark for the Indies, to apply himself to trade, when an illness at the moment of his embarkation, prevented it. One of his relations, inspector of a factory, received him at Rouen, and made him enter his office. This establishment, animated by the spirit of Turgot, made experiments in the details of its business, on the arts and sciences, on *political economy*, and even in the highest

problems of government. It was peopled by philosophers. Roland distinguished himself there. The Government sent him into Italy, to study the progress of commerce. He parted reluctantly from his young friend, and wrote regularly to her scientific letters, intended as notes to a work he proposed writing on Italy, —letters in which sentiment is revealed, under science, more resembling the studies of a philosopher, than the communications of a lover. On his return, she again saw in him a friend; his age, his gravity, his manners, his laborious habits, made her consider him as a sage, who existed solely on reason. In the union which they meditated, and which assimilated less to love, than to the ancient associations of the days of Socrates and Plato, the one sought a disciple, rather than a wife; the other married a master, more than a husband. M. Roland returned to Amiens. He wrote there to her father, to ask of him the hand of his daughter. This he refused roughly. He feared in M. Roland, whose austerity disgusted him, a censor for himself, a tyrant for his child. Informed of her father's refusal, she became indignant, and, destitute of everything, entered a convent, from which she hoped Roland would at once remove her. She lived there upon the coarsest food, prepared by her own hands, and plunged into deep study, fortifying her heart *against adversity.*

She flattered herself, that M. Roland, on learning her resolution and retreat, would hasten to take her from the convent, and unite their destinies; but the time passed, Roland came not, scarcely wrote. He came at last, after six months, and tardily resolved on offering her his hand. She accepted it; but so much calculation, hesitation, and coldness, had robbed the young captive of the little illusion which might have remained to her, reducing her sentiments to a stern esteem. She devoted rather than gave herself. It appeared to her beautiful, to immolate herself for the happiness of a worthy man.

The affectionate pupil of Jean Jacques Rousseau is seen again at this momentous period of her existence. The marriage of Madame Roland is an evident imitation of that of Hélöise with M. de Volmar. But the bitterness of reality does not fail to pierce through the heroism of its devotion.

Roland, arbitrary and egotistic, exacted, from the commencement of their marriage, that his wife should cease to see the young and affectionate friends whom she had loved at the convent, and who lived at Amiens; and, after some years passed at Amiens, he obtained employment in the same office at Lyons, his native place, to which they accordingly removed. In winter he dwelt in the town; he passed the rest of the year in the country, at his father's house, where his mother who was living, resided; a woman respectable by

her age, but meddlesome and overbearing in her household. Madame Roland, in all the flower of her youth, beauty, and genius, thus found herself banished, and beset between an implacable mother-in-law, a restless brother-in-law, and domineering husband. The most passionate love could scarcely have sufficed for so grievous a situation: to sooth her she only had her sense of duty, her occupations, her philosophy, and her child. This was sufficient for her, and concluded by transforming this gloomy retreat into an abode of harmony and peace.

There is at the foot of the mountains of Beaujolais, in the large basin of the Saône, in face of the Alps, a series of little hills piled up like waves of sand, which the patient vine-dressers of these countries have planted with vines, and which form between them at their base, oblique valleys, narrow and sinuous ravines, which extend out into little green meadows. These meadows have each their rill of water dropping from the mountains, the willow, the birch, and the poplar, tracing their course and concealing the bed. The sides and tops of these hills only bear above these lowly vines some wild peach-trees which do not shade the grapes, and the great walnut-trees in the orchards near the house. On the declivity of La Platière—one of these sandy protuberances—was the paternal inheritance of M. Roland, a simple rustic edifice, *with a yard surrounded* by barns, where the hay-

vest was garnered, a press for the vintage, cellars for the wine, and a dove-cot in the front of the house; behind was a small kitchen-garden, bordered with box pinks and fruit trees pruned down to the ground; a green arbour was formed at the end of each walk. A little further on was an orchard, where the trees, inclining in a thousand attitudes, threw a light shadow over an acre or so of close-cut sward; and beyond, a large enclosure of low vines, cut in right lines by little green paths; such is this spot! The gaze is turned from the gloomy and lowering horizon towards the mountains of Beaujeu, spotted on their sides by black pines, and separated by large meadows, where the oxen of Charolais fatten, and upon the valley of the Saône, immense oceans of verdure surmounted here and there by a number of steeples. The belt of the higher Alps covered with snow, and the dome of Mont Blanc, which commands the whole, frames this vast landscape.

Such was, during five years, the horizon of this young woman. It was there that she plunged into the depths of that Nature which she had so often dreamed of in her youth, and of which she could only perceive some small bits of sky, and some confused perspectives of royal forests, from the height of her window, over the roofs of Paris. It was there that her simple tastes and loving soul found food and exercise for her sensibility.

Her life was divided between household cares,

the culture of her mind, and active charity, that cultivator of the heart. Adored by the peasants, whose benefactor she was, she applied to the consolation of their miseries the little superfluity which a rigid economy left her, and to the curing their diseases, the knowledge she had acquired in medicine. She was fetched from three or four leagues distance, to visit a sick person. On Sunday the steps of her court-yard were covered with invalids who came to seek relief, or convalescents who came to bring her, as testimony of their gratitude, baskets of chestnuts, goats' milk, cheese, or apples from their orchards. She rejoiced to find the country people just, sensible, and grateful. She had drawn her pictures from people residing in the vicinity of large cities. The burning of chateaux during the pillage and massacres of September, taught her later, that these seas of men, then so calm, have tempests more terrible than those of the ocean, and that society requires institutions as the waves require a bed, and strength is as indispensable as justice, in the government of a people.

In the mean time the Revolution of '89 had sounded, and came to surprise her in the bosom of this retreat.

Intoxicated with philosophy, ardent with the idea of humanity, an adorer of antique liberty, she became inflamed at the first flash of this furnace of *new ideas.*

All her repressed love was poured forth in her opinions. She avenged herself on her destiny, which refused her happiness, by sacrificing herself for the happiness of others. Happy and beloved, she would have been but a woman; unhappy and isolated, she became the head of a party.

The opinions of M. and Madame Roland excited against them, in the first moment, all the commercial aristocracy of Lyons, an honest and pure-minded city, but one of money, where everything is calculated, where all ideas have the weight and immobility of interest; but ideas have an irresistible current, which attracts even the most stagnant population. Lyons was led on and overwhelmed by the opinions of the epoch, and M. Roland was raised to the municipality at the first elections, and was afterwards deputed to Paris by the municipal council to defend there the commercial interests of Lyons, in the committees of the Constituent Assembly.

It was on the 20th of February, 1791, that Madame Roland re-entered this Paris, from whence she had gone out, five years before, a young unknown girl, without a name, and to which she returned as a flame to entirely animate a party, found a republic, reign a moment, and die. She had in her mind a confused presentiment of this destiny. Genius and will knew their power; they fell before the others, and prophesied their mis-

sion. Madame Roland seemed beforehand carried by hers to the centre of action. She ran, the day after her arrival, to the place of the Assembly. She saw the *powerful* Mirabeau, the *astonishing* Cazalés, the *audacious* Maury, the *crafty* Lameth, and the *cold* Barnave; and remarked, in the language and attitude of the *coté droit*, that the ancient aristocracy survived in the blood, and revenged itself, even after its defeat by the democracy, who envied, even while subjugating it. Equality wrote itself in the laws, long before it was established between the races. Nature is aristocratic; we must a long time practise independance to give the republican people the noble attitude and polite dignity of a citizen.

It was at this epoch that her husband and herself united themselves with some of those men, the most fervent amongst the apostles of popular ideas; not with those who shone more in the favour of the people, and with the brilliancy of talent; but with those who appeared to love the Revolution, for the Revolution itself, and devoted themselves, with a sublime disinterestedness, not to the advancement of their fortunes, but to the progress of humanity. Brissot came one of the first. M. and Madame Roland had been, for some time, in correspondence with him, upon the subjects of public economy, and upon the grand problems of liberty. Their ideas had fraternised, *and grown up together*. But, eventually, she did

did not find in him sufficient hatred against the enemies of the people. The inconstant soul of Brissot did not appear to have enough consistency for a sentiment of devotion. His activity spread over all his subjects, giving to him the appearance of an artist in ideas, more than an apostle. He was called an intriguer.

Brissot brought Péthion, his schoolfellow and friend, who was already member of the Constituent Assembly; and whose speeches, in two or three circumstances, had been remarked. (Brissot passed for the inspirator of his discourses.) Buzot and Robespierre, both members of the same Assembly, were there introduced.—Buzot, whose pensive beauty, intrepidity, and eloquence, later agitated the heart, and affected the admiration of Madame Roland; Robespierre, whose inquietude of soul, and fanaticism of hatred, threw, at that time, a ferment of agitation into all the conventicles, where men were conspiring in the name of the people. They agreed to meet four times a week, in the evening, in the drawing-room of this woman, to discuss the prospects of the Revolution; and thus, as in the conspiracy of Harmodius, it was a woman who held the torch to light the conspirators.

Madame Roland found herself thus thrown, from the first day, into the centre of the movement. Her invisible hand touched the first threads of the yet confused web, which was to

weave the greatest events. This part, the only one permitted to her sex, flattered at once her woman's pride and political passion. She managed it with that modesty, which had been in her the masterpiece of skill, had it not been the gift of Nature. Placed beyond the circle, near a work-table, she worked with her hands, or wrote her letters, while listening, with apparent indifference, to the discussions of her friends. Often tempted to take a part, she bit her lips, to repress her thoughts. A soul of energy and action, the length and wordy diffuseness of these councils without result, inspired her with a secret disdain. Action evaporated itself in words; and the time passed, carrying with it opportunity, never to return.

After the massacre of the Champs-de-Mars, Robespierre, accused of having conspired, with the compilers of the petition of abdication, and menaced, as seditious, with the vengeance of the National Guard, was obliged to conceal himself. Madame Roland, accompanied by her husband, conducted him, at eleven o'clock in the evening, to a retreat, at the end of the Marais; an asylum safer than in their own house. He had already been careful to shun his own home. Madame Roland then repaired to Buzot, their common friend, and conjured him to go to the Feuillants, where he was then influential, to exculpate Robespierre, *before* the decrees of accusation were

hurled against him. Buzot hesitated a moment: then, "I will do all I can," said he, "to save this unfortunate young man; though I am far from holding the opinions of certain persons on his account. He dreams too much of himself, to love liberty; but he serves it, and that is sufficient. I will be there to defend him." Thus three future victims of Robespierre conspired, that night, and unknown to him, for the safety of the very man by whom they were to die. Destiny is a mystery, from whence spring the strangest coincidences, and which spreads a net for men by their virtues, equally as by their crimes. Death is every where, but virtue alone does not repent. In the dungeons of the Conciergerie Mad. Roland dwelt, with pleasure, on the recollection of this night. If Robespierre, in his power, called it to mind, that memory must have struck colder on his heart, than even the headsman's axe.

[The day of the Tuilleries was passed, the King imprisoned in the Temple, his deposition decreed, the question of the King's trial was moved by the Jacobins, and unsuccessfully opposed by the Girondins, whose influence was rapidly waning. Roland had discovered the iron chest, to him a Pandora's box, and the commencement of anarchy, and mutual hatred had appeared in the Convention, when an obscure adventurer named Achille Viard, challenged the Girondins, and especially Mad. Roland, with treasonable correspondence with the proscribed exiles. This accusation was the commencement of anarchy, and mutual hatred in

the Convention, and the occasion for the abandonment of all decency and propriety of language and demeanour, reducing the Assembly to the manners of a street row.]

In the midst of these tumults, and these mutual insults, Madame Roland, called by the Convention to be confronted with her accuser Viard, appeared at the bar.

The appearance of a young woman, beautiful, chief of a party, combining in herself the seductions of nature with the prestige of genius, blushing, yet proud of the part her importance in the Republic decreed her, inspired silence, decency, and the admiration of the Assembly. Madame Roland explained herself with the simplicity and modesty of an accused person sure of her innocence, and who disdains to confound her accusers otherwise than by the brilliancy of her truth. This woman's voice, succeeding for the first time to the hoarse clamours of irritated men, seemed to bring a new note to the accents of the tribune, and added one more charm to the graceful eloquence of her expressions. Viard, convicted of impudence, was silent. The plaudits absolved and revenged Madame Roland. She retired in the midst of marks of respect and enthusiasm from the Convention. All the members rose, all bowed, on her passing out. She bore in her soul, she involuntarily shewed in her attitude, a secret joy in having *appeared in the midst* of the senate of her country.

in having fixed for a moment the eyes of all France, avenged her friends, and confounded her enemies. "See this triumph!" said Marat to Camille Desmoulins, sitting near him in the chamber; "these tribunes, which remain cold, and are silent, are wiser than we." Robespierre himself despised the ridiculous conspiracy dreamt of by Chabot, and smiled for the last time on the beauty and innocence of Madame Roland.

[The Girondins, now attacked on all sides, were defending themselves vigorously, but injudiciously, and the lamentable defection of their general, Dumouriez, brought disgrace on his party. Danton, too, might have been conciliated, but they unwisely rejected all connection with him, and forced him into the ranks of their enemies, an oversight which he saw, and even deplored prophetically, fearing that he should ruin them, and that their fall would ruin him in turn. The Jacobins agitated the crowd without against the alleged moderation and hostility to the people of the Girondins, and eventually impeached them, and even got up a plot to seize them by a *coup de main* in the Assembly, which was only discovered by the loving fears of Lodoïska, the beautiful mistress of Louvet, who gave them notice just in time to enable them to avoid the snare. The impeachment was carried, several were arrested or had fled, and the revolutionary committee of the commune employed armed men to arrest Roland, who had for some time held aloof from the Convention, in his house.]

The recollection of this old man, his wife's genius and beauty, popular report, which made

of their domestic hearth a focus of conspiracy against the Mountain, Marat's declamations, Robespierre's insinuations, the perpetual allusions of the Jacobin journals to the occult puissance of the family; lastly, the name of "Rolandists," given to the Girondins,—thus confounding the pretended crimes of Roland in the crimes attributed to his friends,—had not permitted the people to forget the fallen Minister. He was too much feared to be pardoned. They thought to arrest, in him, the entire conspiracy against the Republic, and to find, at his house, all the threads and all the soul of the federal party. At six in the evening, while the multitude were yet surrounding the Convention, and his friends were fighting at the tribune, the sectionaries appeared at his house, and summoned him to follow them in the name of the revolutionary committee. They showed him a written order; Roland refused obedience to a self-constituted authority, and declared he would use such force in self-defence as his years had left him. "I have no orders to employ force," replied the leader of the band, "I will go and consult the communal council," and he left some of his comrades on guard.

Madame Roland arms herself with all the sentiment the violation of the law, and perils of her *husband* inspire her with. She hurriedly indites *a letter to the Convention*, to demand vengeance;

she writes a note besides to the president, praying him to admit her to the bar. She throws herself into a hackney-coach, and hurries to the Tuilleries.

The mob and the troops filled the courts. She lowers her veil to escape recognition by her enemies. Repulsed at first by the sentinels, she succeeds, by dint of ruse and perseverance, in getting into the hall of the petitioners. She hears thence, during hours of anguish, the dull sound of the noise in the hall, and the tumults of the tribunes which are attacking her friends, or applauding her enemies. She sends in a note to the president by a deputy of the Plaine, named Rozé, who recognizes and protects her. Rozé returns after long delay; he recounts to her the murderous movement against the Girondins, the consternation of that party, the danger of the twenty-two proscribed heads, the impossibility of making a diversion in the chamber to listen to and discuss a woman's petition. She insists; Rozé brings Vergniaud to her. Madame Roland and Vergniaud converse aside, while their party is falling to pieces. "Let me enter, get me the word," urged the courageous woman; "I will explain truths not useless to the Republic, which will arouse the Convention from its stupor. An example of courage may put the nation to the blush." The eloquence she felt in herself created an illusion as to the cowardice of assemblies. Vergniaud groans at this delusion, turns her from her design, presses her hands in

his as for a last adieu for ever, and re-enters the hall, thrilled, and fortified to reply to Robespierre.

Madame Roland quits the Tuilleries, runs on foot to Louvet's house, by whom she was loved, and whose courage she wished to invoke. Louvet was at the Convention. On her return her porter apprised her that Roland, delivered from the surveillance of the sectionaries, had fled to a neighbouring house. She hurries thither. Her husband had already changed his asylum. She follows him from door to door, and finishes by discovering him: she falls into his arms, recounts her attempts, rejoices at his deliverance, and leaves him, to force the door of the Convention.

Night had set in above a couple of hours. All alone she traverses the illuminated streets, without knowing whose is the triumph of this illumination. On her arrival at the Carrousel, where 40,000 men had just before been stationed, and a vast multitude in agitation, she found the place empty and silent. Some occasional sentinels were guarding the doors of the national palace. The sitting was raised. She inquired of a group of *sans-culottes* watching round a cannon, who told her with accents of a joy they thought she shared in, the downfall of her party. She returns, appalled, to her residence, and embracing her sleeping daughter, deliberates whether she shall save herself from arrest by flight. Her husband's asylum could *not conceal* the two. The only other one she

could have borrowed, except that, would have given colour to the calumnies against her virtue, which her virtue dreaded more than death. She decided to await her fate, and to brave it in the scene of her married and maternal life; and in this resolve sat down to write to Roland the results of her day. Overcome with the fatigue and anxieties of the day, she had just fallen asleep, when the members of the section broke into her house, and her woman aroused her. She got up, and knowing the death that awaited her, dressed herself with propriety, and made a parcel of her most necessary attire, as if quitting her house for ever. The sectionaries were waiting for her in her saloon: they presented her the order for her arrest from the commune. She demands a minute only, to inform a friend, by note, of her situation, and to recommend her daughter to his protection. This was granted her: but the chief of the sectionaries insisting on reading the name of the friend she was addressing, she tore it up with indignation, preferring to disappear without adieux to denouncing a friendship which would be converted into a crime in those she loved.

She was torn, at break of day, from her daughter and servants in tears. "How you are beloved!" exclaimed one of the sectionaries in astonishment, who had never seen in this handsome and tender-hearted woman aught than the

head of an odious and vilified party. "Because I love," replied Madame Roland, with gentle pride.

She was thrown into a carriage surrounded by gendarmes. The people, and the women in the street collected since the morning by the spectacle of this arrest, followed the carriage, shouting, "To the guillotine." The mob like to see everything come down. A commissary of the commune demanded of Madame Roland if she would like the windows pulled up to relieve her of these cries. "No!" was her reply! "No! oppressed innocence should not take the attitude of crime and shame: I am not afraid of the looks of good men, and I defy those of my enemies."—"You have more character than many men," rejoined the commissary; "you are tranquilly expecting justice."—"Justice! if there were any, I should not be here! No! I shall go to the block as I go to prison. I despise life." The prison-door closed on her. All the virtues, the faults, all the hopes, repentance, and heroism of her party seemed to enter that gaol with her. History will follow her there to contemplate them.

Since the death of the Girondins, the guillotine seemed to have been elevated to the rank of an institution. It did not cease from devouring victims: those victims were taken from all parties, whether the Revolution left them behind or met

them in its advance. Some sanguinary demagogues of the commune and the Mountain, demanded that the instrument of murder should be constructed in stone on the *Place de la Concorde*, and in front of the Tuilleries. According to them, the guillotine was to be a public and national edifice, proving to all, and always, that the watchfulness of the people was enduring, and their vengeance eternal.

The revolutionary tribunal, attentive to the least sign from the committee of public safety, hastened to dispatch to death, all those who were pointed out. Trial was but a brief formality.

The name of Mad. Roland could not long escape the people's recollection. Friend of the Gironde, this woman might be its Nemesis, if she were permitted to survive the illustrious friends who had preceded her to the tomb. Her name was set down on the list transmitted by the committee every evening to Fouquier Tinville. Robespierre signed this list with a remorse visible in his countenance. In the early days of his residence at Paris, the deputy of Arras, then obscure, had visited the house of this lady. At the epoch when the Constituent Assembly humiliated the pride and disdained the words of Robespierre, Madame Roland had divined his genius, honoured his perseverance, encouraged his unappreciated eloquence. The recollection of all this weighed on the hand of the member

of committee of public safety at the moment he was signing that mandate to the tribunal, which was to be her death-warrant. Madame Roland and Robespierre had begun the Revolution together. The Revolution had led them, the one to the summit of power, the other to the depth of adversity. Robespierre possibly was indebted to her encouragement for that empire over opinion, which gave him the right to save or condemn her. Any generous-minded man would have been moved by that intimacy and its remembrance. Robespierre was only stoical. He took inflexibility for strength, obstinacy for will, and would have torn out his heart had it been capable of advising a weakness. System had killed nature in him. He thought himself more than mortal in sacrificing humanity, and the more he suffered by such violence, the juster he thought himself. He had reached that acme of sophistry and exaggeration of false virtue, which makes us despise in man all his good feelings.

Madame Roland had been imprisoned in the Abbaye since the 31st of May. The gaolers mollified her captivity as much as the walls of a prison permitted. There are beings who can only be persecuted from a distance. Beauty mollifies all who approach it. They assigned her, unknown to the commissioners, a chamber *lighted by a ray* of sunshine. They brought her

books and flowers. She liked to surround herself with them in times of her happiness, as the most divine and cheapest of luxuries. They wreathed the iron bars of her window with climbing plants, to leave her at least, in concealing the grating, the illusion of liberty. They permitted some friends to converse with her; and, secure as to the fate of her husband and daughter she almost enjoyed the calm and reflection of her dungeon.

No misfortune could, however, bend her soul to resignation, or turn it towards heaven. Her disgust of superstition had weakened in her even the faith in a present God, and a certain immortality. A woman of antiquity in Christian days, her virtue, like her opinions, was Roman. Her chief consolation was her journal, in which she wrote, by fragments, her private and public life, concealing these pages day by day from the surveillance of her keepers, and confided it to Bosc, her friend, and manager of the Jardin des Plantes, who concealed it under his cloak, and carried it away with him.

These pastimes of her captivity softened her sadness. Speech is a revenge, the indignation that exhales is relieved. She gave herself up, too, to hope, and she was in truth set at liberty for a few hours. Intoxicated with liberty, she flew to her residence to embrace her child, and look once more on the scene of her private life. This day's liberty, however, was only a trap of her perse-

cutors. Satellites of the commune were watching her joy to poison it. They were waiting on the doorsteps of her house. They did not allow her to touch the threshold, to pass the door, or hear the voice of her child. They arrested her in spite of her prayers, and threw her, scarce escaped, into another prison, St. Pélagie, that sink of vice, into which the prostitutes of Paris were all swept. They wished to degrade her by contact, and to torture her through her modesty. She was obliged to live with these ruined creatures. Their manners, their remarks, their moral leprosy, offended her eyes, her ears, her purity. She had accepted death; she was condemned to infamy.

The compassion of her jailers removed her at last from these stains. They gave her a room, a truckle-bed, a table. She took up her memoirs, and saw her friends once more. The coward Lanthenas, assiduous attendant upon her in her days of power, the ungrateful Pache, brought into power by her and her husband, were seated, the one at the summit of the Mountain, the other at the head of the commune: they affected forgetfulness. Danton, absent, turned his face aside; Robespierre durst not rob the people of a head. Still the old friendship that had subsisted between them gave the captive an instant of hope, almost of weakness. She was ill in the prison infirmary; a doctor who called himself a friend of *Robespierre* came to see her. He spoke to her of

Robespierre. "Robespierre," she replied, "I knew and esteemed. I thought him a sincere and ardent friend of liberty. I fear now he only loves dominion, and perchance vengeance. I think him susceptible of prejudice, easily excited, slow to reconsider his decisions, and too ready to condemn all who do not share his opinions. I have seen a great deal of him; ask him to put his hand on his heart, and to tell you if he thinks ill of me." This conversation suggested to her the idea of writing to Robespierre, which she did. She wrote, but the idea of owing her life to Robespierre, the persecutor of her friends, was intolerable; she tore the letter in half, but preserved the relics, which have remained to us. She then thought, as her journal attests, of taking poison, and had actually written to her husband, when the thoughts of her child unnerved her, and she determined to await her destiny, and take the chance of any alteration in it.

After the execution of the Girondins, she was transferred to the Conciergerie, where she occupied a dark, damp cell, close to the one the Queen had tenanted; a vicinity too similar to remorse. In a few months both had arrived by different roads to the same dungeon, to proceed from thence to the same scaffold; the one fallen from the throne by the effort of the other; the other raised to the first honours of the Republic, and thence *hurled down* in turn, and by the side of her own

victim. These reprisals of fate resemble chance: they are often justice.

The indictment and interrogatory were only a repetition of the accusations against the Gironde. They reproached her with being Roland's wife, and the friend of his accomplices. She admitted these crimes as a glory, and spoke with tenderness of her husband, with respect of her friends, with a proud modesty of herself. Interrupted with clamours of rage every time she wished to give vent to her indignation, she was silent under the invectives of her auditory. The people, then took a terrible and commanding part, in the dialogue between the judges and the accused; they granted or checked speech, they commanded judgment.

She heard her condemnation as a woman who, in her sentence of death, receives her title to immortality. She rose, bowed lightly, and with the expression of irony on her lips, said to her judges, "I thank you for thinking me worthy to partake the fate of the great men you have assassinated." She went down the steps of the Conciergerie with a hurry and lightness of step that resembled the bound of a child towards a wished-for object. In walking along the corridor, the prisoners grouped to see her, with whom she had been wont to converse and discuss through the bars of her cell; she looked at them with a smile, and running her finger round her neck, she made the motion of the *knife cutting* off her head. This was her only

adieu. It was understood, and the men who did not weep over themselves, wept for her.

Many carts bore their freight of condemned to the scaffold that day. They made her ascend into the last, by the side of an aged, feeble man, by name Lamarche, once the director of the bank-note department. She was attired in a white robe: her beautiful black hair fell in waves down to her knees: her complexion, subdued by her long captivity, now revived by the sharp frosty air of November, had the freshness of her childish days. Her eyes spoke, her features were radiant with glory. Her lips hesitated between pity and contempt. The crowd insulted her with gross words. "To the guillotine," screamed the women. "I am going there," she replied; "I am going, I shall be there in a moment; but those who send me will not be long behind me. I go innocent, they will come stained with blood; and you who applaud to-day will do the same then." Occasionally she turned her head aside from their insults, and bent over with a filial tenderness towards her companion. The old man was weeping. She spoke to him, and encouraged him to firmness. She even attempted to make fun of the funeral ride, and succeeded in making him smile.

A colossal statue of Liberty, like the liberty of the time,—of clay—was then set up in the middle of the square, where the obelisk stands now. The

scaffold was built by the side of the statue. On reaching there, Madame Roland descended. At the moment the exectioner was taking her arm to make her go up to the guillotine first, she made one of those self-sacrifices that a woman's heart can alone entertain and display in such an hour. "I ask you a last favour, it is not for myself," she said, resisting the headsman's arm a little. "You will grant it me?" Then turning to the old man, "Go up first; my blood shed before your eyes would make you taste the bitterness of death doubly; you must not know the pain of seeing my head fall." The executioner consented. Delicacy of touching sensibility—forgetting and immolating itself to spare a moment of agony to an unknown old man, and attesting the coolness of heart in the heroism at death!

After the execution of Lamarche, which she heard without turning pale, she lightly ascended the steps, and bowing to the side of the statue of Liberty, as if to confess it even in dying by it, "O liberty!" she exclaimed, "O liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name!" She turned to the executioner, and in an instant her head rolled in the basket.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

WHILE France and Paris, the chiefs, and the armies of the factions were preparing to rend the Republic, the shadow of a great thought shot through the mind of a young girl, and went nigh to disconcert events and men, by throwing a woman's arm and life across the destiny of the Revolution. One might have said that Providence wished to sport with the greatness of the achievement in the weakness of the instrument, and that it was pleased to contrast, in personal contest, the two fanaticisms: the one, under hideous features of a people's revenge, in Marat; the other, under heavenly beauty and love of country, in a Joan of Arc of liberty: both, nevertheless, ending in their error, in one act—murder; and akin, unhappily, in the eyes of posterity; not from the end but the means; not through the face but the hand; not through soul, but through blood!

In a wide and populous street which intersects the town of Caen, capital of Normandy, and in those days the centre of the Girondin insurrection,

you might have seen, at the end of a court-yard, an ancient house with grey walls, weather-stained, and ruinous with age. This house was styled the *Grand Manoir*. A fountain with stone edges, all verdant with moss, occupies an angle of the court. A low, narrow door, whose channelled jambs joined at the top in an arch, opened on the worn steps of a spiral staircase, which led to the upper floors; and two casements, with the little octagonal panes set in leaden frames, shed a feeble light on the staircase and large naked chambers. The pale day impressed, by this antiquity and obscurity, a character of ruin, mystery, and melancholy, which the human mind likes to see extended like a pall over the cradles of great ideas, and over the abiding-places of great natures. There, in the beginning of 1793, lived a granddaughter of the great French tragedian, Pierre Corneille. Poets and heroes are of one race, the difference between them being that of idea and action. The one does what the other conceives, but the thought is the same. Women are naturally enthusiastic like the one, courageous like the others. Poetry, heroism, and love, are of the same blood.

This house belonged to a poor widow—childless, aged, and infirm—named Madame de Bretteville. For some years a young female relation had been living with her, whom she had taken and brought up, to be a stay to her age and to cheer her loneliness. This young woman was now about twenty-

four years of age. Her grave, serene, and collected though striking beauty, seemed to have contracted the stamp of this austere home and retired life. There was something about her like an apparition. The inhabitants of the quarter, who saw her go out of a Sunday with her old aunt to church, or caught sight of her through the door, reading hours together in the court-yard, seated in the sun, on the step of the fountain, tell how their admiration of her was mixed with respect and awe: whether from that brightness of a powerful thought which intimidates the vulgar eye, or the atmosphere of soul spread around her features; or, may be, from a tragic presentiment delineated on her brow.

This girl was of lofty stature, without, however, exceeding the ordinary height of the large yet light figures of the women of Normandy. Grace and natural dignity marked, like an inward rhythm, her step, and all her motions. The ardour of the south was united in her complexion with the colour of the women of the north. Her hair seemed black when it was fastened up in a mass round her head or parted in two waves over her forehead. It seeemed tipped with gold at the extremity of the tresses, like the deepest and most resplendent ear of wheat in the sun. Her large eyes were of a changing colour, like the sea, which borrows its tint from the shade or the sunshine: blue when she was reflecting, almost black when she was

animated. Very long lashes, darker than her hair, gave depth to her look. Her nose, united to the forehead by an insensible curve, was slightly dilated towards the middle. Her Greek mouth marked out her lips clearly; its expression was indefinable, hovering between tenderness and severity, equally suited to breathe love or patriotism; while her rounded chin, parted by a deep dimple, gave the lower part of her face an accent of masculine resolution, which contrasted with the perfectly feminine grace of her contours. Her attire, conformable to the paucity of her fortune, and to the retreat she lived in, was of sober simplicity: she trusted to Nature, and disdained all art or caprice of fashion in her garments. Those who have seen her in their youth, always depict her as almost invariably dressed in a gown of dark cloth, cut like a habit, with a hat of grey felt turned up at the edges, and trimmed with black ribbon, as was usually worn then by women of her station. The sound of her voice, that living echo which concentrates a whole soul in a vibration of the air, left a profound and tender impression on the ear of those to whom she addressed herself. Men spoke of that sound ten years after they had heard it, as of a strange ineffaceable music which was engraven in their memory. She had in this harpsichord of the soul notes so deep and so resonant, that to hear her was more than to see her, *and sound made* a part of her beauty.

This young woman's name was Charlotte de Corday d'Armont. Although of noble blood, she was born in a cottage, called le Ronceray, in the village of Ligneries, not far from Argentan. Misfortune had ushered her into that life which she was to quit by the scaffold.

Her father, François de Corday d'Armont, had been one of those country gentlemen whom poverty confounds almost with the peasant. That nobility preserved nothing of his ancient station but a certain reverence for family names, and a vague hope of the return of fortune, which hindered him at once from demeaning himself in manner, or assisting himself by labour. The land this rural nobility cultivated in petty inalienable domains, supported without humiliating it by its indigence: the noblesse, and the land seemed to have been wedded in France, as the aristocracy and the sea were wedded in Venice.

To his agricultural pursuits M. de Corday joined a political dissatisfaction and literary tastes, very general at that time in that well-informed class of the noble population. He sighed for a revolution, and, with a horror of superstition, had the ardour of a dawning philosophy, the foresight of a necessary revolution.

He languished in his little estate of Ligneries in the bosom of a family increasing every year, which made him feel still more the misery of his position. After the death of their mother, whom the

pain of her position had borne down, Charlotte and her sisters lived some years at Ligneries, almost abandoned to nature, dressed in coarse linen, like other girls of Normandy, weeding in the garden, hay-making, gleaning, or apple-gathering in the narrow patrimony of their father. At last M. de Corday was obliged to part with them, and they entered, under the auspices of their nobility and poverty, the monastery l'Abbaye aux Dames, at Caen, originally founded in 1066 by Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror.

Charlotte was now thirteen. These convents were then true Christian gynecæa, where females lived retired from the world, hearing all its reports, and taking share in its movements. Monastic life, full of mild observances, close friendships, sometimes charmed the young inmate. The iron character of Madame Roland was heated and softened by this heavenly flame. Charlotte, more tender, yielded to it more easily. She was for some years a model of piety, and had ideas of closing her life, scarce opened at this first page, and burying herself in this sepulchre, where, in place of death, she was to find repose, friendship, and happiness.

But as her mind became stronger, the more deeply she went, and soon arrived at the extremity of her thoughts. She saw, beyond her childish faith, other new, luminous, sublime dogmas. She *abandoned neither God* nor virtue, those two first

passions of her soul; but she gave them other names and other forms. The philosophy which then inundated France with its light, passed the barriers of the monasteries, with other fashionable works. And there, more deeply meditated in the solitude of the cloister, and in opposition with monastic trivialities, philosophy formed her most ardent adepts.

At the moment of the suppression of the monasteries, Charlotte was nineteen. The distress of her father's house had increased with time. Her two brothers, engaged in the King's service, had emigrated; one of her sisters was dead, the other was keeping house for her father at Argentan. The old aunt, Madame de Bretteville, received Charlotte into her house at Caen. This aunt, like all the family, was without fortune. She lived in the obscurity and silence which scarce permit neighbours to know the existence of the poor widow. Her age and infirmities deepened the gloom of her existence. She had but one servant, whom Charlotte assisted in her domestic duties. She would gracefully receive the old friends of the house, and of an evening would accompany her aunt to those little parties which the fury of the people had not prohibited the old nobility from giving, when they met, and groaned over the state of things;—sentiments that Charlotte never contradicted, though in her heart she *entertained* very different opinions.

Her domestic and filial duties fulfilled, Charlotte was free in all her thoughts and all her time. Madame de Bretteville's religious and political opinions were habits rather than convictions; and besides, philosophy had sapped creeds, even in the minds of the old noblesse. And the republican opinions of Charlotte's father had not failed to infiltrate themselves somewhat into his relatives. The Corday family leant to the new ideas. Madame de Bretteville herself concealed, under the decency of her regrets for the old *régime*, a secret favour for the Revolution. She allowed her niece to feed on works, on opinions, and journals of her own choice. Charlotte's age disposed her to the perusal of novels, which furnish dreams ready-made for the imagination of idle souls; but her mind led her to the works of philosophy, which transform the vague instincts of humanity into sublime theories of government, and books of history, which convert theory into practice, and ideas into men.

She found this double demand of her mind and her heart satisfied in Jean Jacques Rousseau, that philosopher of love, and poet of politics; in Raynal, that fanatic of humanity; and in Plutarch, that impersonator of history, who paints, rather than relates, and vivifies events and the characters of heroes.

The Girondins were now contending, with a *prodigious celebrity of* eloquence and courage,

against their enemies in the Convention. The Jacobins were desirous, as was believed, of wresting the Republic from the Gironde, with the sole view of precipitating France into a sanguinary anarchy. The imminent danger of liberty, the odious tyranny of the Parisian mob, substituted for the lawful sovereignty of the nation represented by its deputies; the arbitary imprisonments, the assassinations of September, the conspiracy of the 10th of March, the insurrection of the 30th and 31st of May, the expulsion and proscription of the purest party in the Assembly, their scaffold in the back-ground, where liberty would be immolated with them; the merits of the individuals defending in the breach the last ramparts of society, and the hearth of each citizen; and in their place a Marat, the dregs and leper of the people, triumphing over the law by sedition, crowned by impunity, borne to the tribune in the arms of the *Faubourgs*, the dictator of anarchy, of spoliation, of assassination, and threatening all independence, all property, all liberty, all life, in the departments; all these convulsions, these excesses, this Minister had powerfully moved in the provinces of Normandy.

The presence in the Calvados of those proscribed and fugitive deputies, coming to appeal to liberty against oppression, and to kindle the hearths of the departments, to excite avengers for the country, had carried almost to adoration the attachment of the town of Caen for the Girondins, and the

execration against Marat. That name of Marat was become a synonym of crime. What was most desired in Normandy before the 10th August, was less the overturn of the throne, than an equal constitution of monarchy. The death of Louis XVI. had saddened the citizens, who were attached to the King, in memory of the constant visits he had made to the coast, the interest he took in the marine and in commerce, together with the works he had undertaken at Brest and Cherbourg, all betraying an earnest wish to improve the condition of Normandy.

The heart of Charlotte Corday, already wounded by the death of her first and only passion, killed in a popular tumult at Caen, and now panting with love for her country, felt all these blows, levelled at the nation, reunited in the grief, the despair, and courage of a single heart. She beheld the ruin of France, the victims; she thought she saw the tyrant. She swore to revenge the one, and punish the other, and save the whole. For some days she fostered a vague determination in her heart, without perceiving what act the country required of her, and which knot of crime was most urgent to be cut. She studied affairs, men, circumstances, that her courage might not mistake, nor her blood be shed in vain.

A detachment of the Girondin party, comprising, *among other men* of importance, Buzot, Péthion, *Barbaroux, Louvet,* were agitating hotly the district

round Caen, and seeking to combine the general insurrection in the north with a republican insurrection in Brittany, and recruiting for the army of Wimpfen, their ally, who had declared, in answer to the summons of the Convention to repair to Paris, that he would do so, but it should be at the head of 6,000 men, and for the institution of a proper Government, and the redress of abuses. These Girondins, so often stigmatized by Marat, naturally placed the Mountain and the commune under the ban of their enemy's name, and the popular impression was of rising against Marat. The towers of strength, Robespierre, and Danton, were overlooked in the hatred of their colleague. The mass were deceived, and saw only tyranny and freedom in one man; Charlotte was deceived likewise. The shade of Marat darkened the whole Republic.

On Sunday the 7th July, 6,000 volunteers for Paris, stimulated by the proclamation of Louvet, were assembled at Caen. But the enthusiasm of the citizens evaporated, and added but little to the effective strength of Wimpfen's battalions. Charlotte was in a balcony and witnessed the review; her enthusiam was further touched by the sentiment she knew she had excited in the heart of one of the volunteers. Franquelin adored the beautiful republican, and kept up a correspondence full of reserve and respect. She did not *respond* to his feelings; but answered with the sad

and tender reserve of a woman who has no dowry but misfortune. She had, however, given her portrait to the volunteer, and permitted him to love her, at least in her image. M. de Franquelin, carried away with the general rush, and sure of gaining a look of approbation, had enrolled in the battalion of Caen. Charlotte could not avoid turning pale on seeing the battalion defile past her, previous to setting out for Paris. Tears stood in her eyes. Péthion, who was passing under the balcony, and knew Charlotte (from her frequent presence at the Girondin meetings in Caen,) was astonished at this evidence of weakness, and asked her, "Would you be content, if they did not go?" The maiden blushed, made no answer and retired. Péthion did not comprehend her trouble. The future told it. Young Franquelin after the deed and death of his mistress, withdrew to a village in Normandy, struck to death by the blow of the axe that had severed the head of her he adored. There, alone with his mother, he languished some months, and died, asking only that the portrait and letters of Charlotte should be buried with him. That likeness and that secret repose in the coffin.

From the moment of the departure of these volunteers, Charlotte had but one thought—to anticipate their arrival at Paris, to spare their generous *lives, and to* render their patriotism useless, by *delivering France,* before them, from the tyrant

Her attachment, suffered rather than felt, was an additional sadness in her self-sacrifice, but was not its cause. The true cause was patriotism. A sensation of terror ran through France. The scaffold was set up at Paris. It was soon to go the round of the provinces. The power of Marat and the Mountain was to be defended by the executioner. Popular report ran that the monster had already drawn up lists of proscription: 2,500 were marked out at Lyons, 3,000 at Marseilles, 28,000 at Paris, 300,000 in Brittany and the Calvados. The name of Marat made men shudder, as at the sight of death.

Such was the secret disposition of Charlotte, but she wished to see before striking.

She could not acquire information on the state of Paris better than from the Girondins; for which purpose she sought and obtained introduction to Barbaroux and Louvet, a course which exposed her fair fame to some imputations, even at the hands of Péthion, an error that they were soon undeceived in. She obtained from Barbaroux a letter of introduction to one of the Girondins, still in Paris,—Dupont, under pretence of wishing to urge some claims in favour of an early friend of hers, Mademoiselle de Forbin: but she sedulously concealed her scheme, of which Barbaroux indeed said, when he afterwards knew her heroic deed, that had they been cognizant of, and capable of

profiting by her intention, Marat's was not the life they would have counselled her to attempt.

She quitted Caen for ever, on the 7th of July, to go to Argentan, where she took leave of her father and sister, whom she told that she was about to seek refuge against the Revolution and her misery in England.

Her father approved her plan.

The gloom and nakedness of the paternal home, the premature grave of her mother, the exile of her brothers, the discouragement of all hope, the rending of all the ties of infancy, confirmed instead of weakening her resolution. She was leaving nothing behind her, no life to compromise, no spoils to deliver up. In embracing her father and sister, she wept more over the past than the future. She returned the same day to Caen, where she deceived her aunt's tenderness by the same *ruse* she had practised on her father. She told her she was about leaving for England, where some emigrant friends had prepared her an asylum and a condition she could not expect in this country. This pretext covered the tenderness of the farewell and the arrangements for her journey. She had herself secretly taken her place in the diligence for Paris for the next day, the 9th of July.

Charlotte crowned these last hours with grati- *tude, tenderness,* and foresight for that aunt to

whom she was indebted for such protracted and kind hospitality. She provided with one of her friends, for the old servant who had tended her youth. She ordered, paying in advance, of the Caen workwomen, several little presents of dresses and embroidery, intended to be worn after her departure, in remembrance of her, by some young companions of her childhood. She distributed her favourite books among her intimate friends, reserving only a volume of Plutarch to take with her.

At length, on the 9th of July, early in the morning, she took under her arm a small parcel of her most indispensable articles of dress; kissed her aunt, told her she was going to sketch the hay-makers in the neighbouring meadows; and with a drawing-board in her hand, she went out, never to return.

At the foot of the stairs she met the child of a poor artizan, named Robert, who lived in the same house, near the street. The boy used to play in the court-yard, and she would sometimes give him pictures. "Here Robert," she said, handing him the drawing-board, which she now needed no longer; "here, this is for you: be very good,—kiss me,—you will never see me again;" and she kissed the child, leaving a tear on his cheek. This was the last tear on the threshold of the habitation of her youth. She had nothing now to give but her blood.

Her departure, of which the cause was unknown, was revealed to her neighbours of the Rue St. Jean, by a circumstance that completes the picture of the calm serenity of her soul, even to the eve of carrying out her determination.

Opposite Madame de Bretteville's house lived a respectable family, Lacouture. The son, passionate for music, used to devote regularly some hours a-day to his instrument. His open windows let the notes escape, and reach the neighbours' ears. Charlotte, as if to let this melody enter her chamber better, would open her casement at the time the concert commenced; and would sometimes lean forward her head, half hidden by the curtains, on the edge of the window, to listen and think over the sounds. The young musician, encouraged by this apparition of an attentive girl, never missed a day in sitting down to the harpsichord, at the same hour; nor Charlotte a day in opening her window. A common taste seemed to have established a mute intelligence between two souls, who had no acquaintance beyond these sounds.

The day before that on which Charlotte, firm in her wishes, was preparing to leave, to do, and die, the piano was heard at the wonted hour. Charlotte, taken, without doubt, from the fixity of her thoughts, by the force of habit, and the charm of the art she loved, opened her window as usual, and appeared to listen to the notes, with an attention *as calm,* and more dreamy than other days.

However, she shut the casement with an unaccustomed precipitation, before the musician had closed his harpsichord.

The next day, the young neighbour, seating himself before his instrument, looked to the end of the court-yard, at the *Grand Manoir*, to see if the first preludes would make Madame de Bretteville's niece open her shutters. The window opened no more! It was thus he learned Charlotte's departure. The instrument sounded again; but the soul of the young girl hearkened now only to the stormy tumult of her ideas, the summons of death, and the praises of posterity.

Her freedom and steadiness of conversation, in the vehicle that was conveying them to Paris, inspired her companions with admiration and kindly feeling, accompanied by a natural curiosity as to the name and condition of a stranger, brilliant with youth and beauty. Among the travellers were some furious Montagnards, who eschewed the suspicion of federalism at Paris; and who gave vent to imprecations against the Gironde, and their admiration for Marat. These men, encouraged by the unprotected situation of the young woman, ventured on some freedoms of discourse, which she repulsed and cut short, and eventually withdrew from, by pretending to sleep. A young man opposite, struck with such beauty and modesty, offered his respectful

attentions, and solicited permission to ask her hand of her parents; an impromptu which only provoked her lively sallies, and a promise to let him know who she was, subsequently. To the end of the journey, she thus charmed her fellow-travellers, who all regretted to part with her, on their arrival at their destination.

She entered Paris, Thursday, the 11th of July, at noon; and betook herself to an hotel, of which she had obtained the direction, where she went to bed, at five o'clock in the afternoon, and did not wake till the following day. She then arose, dressed herself in simple but respectable dress, and repaired to Dupont's. He was at the Convention. His daughters, in his absence, received Barbaroux's letter from the young stranger. Dupont would not return before the evening; so Charlotte went back to her hotel, and passed the day in her room, reading, reflecting, or in prayer. At six, she went to Dupont's again. The deputy was at table, supping with his family and friends, and came out to see her. She introduced herself; and requested him to take her to see Garat, the Minister of the Interior, as a sort of pretext to justify Barbaroux's letter, and her own desire to see one of the Girondins. Dupont alleged his inability to do so, and appointed the morrow. She quitted him, but not without some Sybilline words of warning to quit Paris. That night, his *effects were* put under seal; and, the following

day, Garat refused to see them, when they called upon him, the hour being unsuitable.

She now inquired her way to the Palais Royal; and, her mind intent on her object, sought a cutler's shop, purchased a poniard knife, paid three francs for it, and hid it under her neckerchief, and then returned slowly into the garden of the Palais Royal, where she seated herself a moment on one of the benches raised against the arcades.

There, though oppressed with thought, she allowed herself to take an interest, for a few moments, in the sports and gambols of some children who played at her feet, and, full of confidence in her genial aspect, supported themselves by her knees. She was all indecision, not as to the act, but as to the way she should accomplish it. Her first idea had been to strike Marat in the Mountain, in the summit of his power, and then to perish with him, a victim to the fury of his partizans. But the conversation she had with Dupont had apprised her that Marat no longer appeared at the Convention. She must find him at home, and to get access to him it was necessary to deceive him.

This was her first difficulty. Her upright soul repudiated dissimulation, and its necessity cost our heroine more than the blow itself. It reduced an act of patriotism to assassination. However, she decided on it.

She entered her room, wrote to Marat as fol-

lows,—"I am from Caen. Your love for your country makes me presume that you will hear with pleasure the unhappy events of that part of the Republic. I will present myself at your house in an hour; have the goodness to receive me, and to give me a few moments' conversation. I will put you in a position to do France a real service."

She presented herself at the time appointed, but she could not obtain admittance. She wrote a second, and more eloquent note, calling herself persecuted, which she left at his door herself, urgently requesting an interview.

Without waiting an answer to this last appeal, Charlotte went out about seven o'clock, dressed with more than ordinary care, to gain over the eyes of the persons who watched over Marat, by an appearance of respectability. Her white dress was covered at the shoulders by a silk kerchief, which hid her bosom, and was folded down to her waist, and tied behind. Her head was covered with a Norman cap, the lace of which flapped on her cheeks. A large green silk riband pressed this cap round her brows. Her hair escaped from it into the nape of her neck, and some curls floated down. No pallor, no unsteadiness of look, no emotion of voice, revealed the death she brought. In this seducing guise she knocked at Marat's *door.*

Marat lived on the first floor of a dilapidated

house, in the Rue des Cordeliers, now Rue de l'Ecole de Medicine, No. 20. The numerous works piled upon the floor, the public leaves, still wet, thrown on the chairs and tables, printers' men going in and out unceasingly, women employed in folding and addressing the pamphlets and papers, the worn stairs, the ill-swept doorway,—all attested the habitual movement and disorder about a man of business, and the perpetual influx of the citizens, to the home of a journalist and coryphœus of the people.

This abode displayed, so to say, the pride of poverty. The misery, though affected, was real; it was the ensign of the tribune. Marat's establishment was that of a humble artizan. We know the woman who managed his house. A single servant assisted her in the cares of the household, while a commissionnaire, named Laurent Basse, did the messages and out-door work.

The devouring activity of the writer had not slackened under the slow malady that consumed him. The inflammation of his blood seemed to fire his very soul. Sometimes in his bed, at others in his bath, he never ceased writing, apostrophizing, abusing his enemies, urging on the Convention and the Cordeliers. Offended at the silence of the Assembly to messages he had sent, he was just addressing them a new letter, wherein he threatened to have himself conveyed in a dying state to the Convention, to put the Representa-

tives to the blush for their effeminacy, and to dictate the necessary murders to them. He left them no repose more than himself. Full of the presentiment of death, he seemed to fear that the supreme hour, all too rapid, might not leave him time to immolate criminals enough. More eager to slay than live, he was hastening to send before him all the victims possible.

Charlotte was ignorant of the difficulties of access to him, but she suspected them. She descended from her carriage, on the opposite side of the street, in front of Marat's dwelling. The day was declining, especially in this sombre quarter. The portress at first refused to let the young unknown visitor into the yard; but she insisted, and had cleared some of the stairs, recalled in vain by the door-keeper. At this noise, Marat's mistress opened the door, and refused admission into the room for the stranger. The undertones of this altercation between the women reached the ears of Marat in his bath, who understood that this was the person from whom he had received the two letters. With a loud voice of command, he ordered her to be let in.

Whether from jealousy or distrust, Albertine obeyed with repugnance and grumbling. She introduced the young girl into the little place where Marat was, and on retiring she left the door half open, in order to hear the invalid's least *word or movement.*

The room was feebly illumined; Marat was in his bath. In this compelled repose of his body, he would not permit repose to his mind. An ill-planed plank, placed on the bath, was covered with papers, open letters, and sheets begun. In his right hand he held the pen, which the stranger's entrance had suspended over the page. The sheet of paper was a letter to the Convention to demand from it judgment and proscription of the last Bourbons tolerated in France. By the side of the bath, an enormous billet of oak, like a block placed on end, bore a leaden inkstand, of the rudest workmanship;—impure source, whence had flowed for three years so much delirium, so much denunciation, so much blood. Marat, covered up in his bath, with a dirty, ink-stained sheet, had only his head, his shoulders, and right arm above water. There was nothing in the man's appearance calculated to propitiate a woman, and to stay the stroke.

Charlotte avoided fixing her look on him, for fear of betraying her horror at his aspect. Standing up, her eyes downcast, her hands drooping near the bath, she waits while Marat interrogates her as to Normandy. She answers briefly, gives her answers the meaning and colouring likely to flatter the presumed disposition of the demagogue. He next asks the names of the Deputies, refugees at Caen. She repeats them; he puts them down; *then when* he has finished writing their names,

"That's good," he says, with the accent of a man sure of his revenge;—"good! before a week's over they shall go to the guillotine."

At these words, as though Charlotte's heart had been waiting a final crime to resolve her to strike the blow, she draws from her bosom the knife, and plunges it, with supernatural force, to the very haft, into Marat's heart. With the same movement Charlotte withdraws the ensanguined blade from the body of the victim, and lets it fall on the floor. "Here, my dear! come to me," shrieked Marat, and expired instantaneously.

At the victim's cry of distress, Albertine, the servant, and Laurent Basse, rush into the room: they receive Marat's senseless head in their hands. Charlotte, motionless and petrified with her crime, was standing behind the window-curtain. The transparency of the material in the fading light of the day, permitted her shadow to appear through it. Laurent, the commissionaire, armed himself with a chair, and levelling with it an ill-aimed blow at her head, knocked her down. Marat's mistress tramples her under foot. In the tumult of the scene, the cries of the two women, the inhabitants of the house ran up, the neighbours and passers-by stop in the street, mount the stairs, inundate the apartment, the court, and soon the quarter; demand, with cut-throat vociferations, that the *assassin be given* up to them to avenge the idol of *the people over* his yet warm corse. The soldiers

and National Guards of the neighbouring posts hurry in. Order is re-established in the tumult; the surgeons are sent for, and endeavour, in vain, to staunch the bleeding; but they only bear a dead body to the bed.

Charlotte rose of herself. Two soldiers held her arms until cords should be brought. The hedge of bayonets that surrounded her could scarcely keep back the crowd, which made the most desperate efforts to tear her to pieces. Marat's mistress, escaping from the women who were consoling her, darted towards Charlotte, and fell back into their arms, and into faintings. A fanatic Cordelier picking up the knife, made a sort of funeral oration over the dead body, brandishing the weapon, ever and anon, as though he would plunge it into the assassin's heart. Charlotte appeared unmoved, except by the heart-rending cries of Marat's concubine.

Some of the members of the committees quitted the hall of the Convention, whither the news had travelled, and ran to the theatre of the crime, where they found the mob increasing, and Charlotte submitting to the interrogations of the procureur of the quarter, who was drawing up the *proces-verbal*. The deputies were confounded at the aspect of so much youth and beauty, calmness and resolution. Crime had never appeared under such traits, which made them pity the *assassin by* the side of the victim.

The *proces-verbal* completed, Chabot and the other deputies ordered her transportation to the Abbaye. The troops and the commissioners could scarce restrain the people, when they saw her carried off in the same vehicle that had brought her; and Charlotte, in these frightful imprecations, already tasted the bitterness of death, and fainted away.

At the Abbaye she underwent a second examination, which lasted till late in the night. She was searched; they only found some trifling articles of female use; but under her neckerchief she still had the sheath of the knife she had struck Marat with. "Do you know this knife?" they inquired. "Yes."—"Who urged you to the crime?"—"I saw civil war about to rend France, and, persuaded that Marat was the principal cause of the perils and calamities of my country, I made the sacrifice of my life for his, to save my country."—"Name the persons who counselled this execrable crime which you could not have imagined yourself."—"Nobody knew my design. I even deceived the aunt with whom I resided. Few persons visit her house. Not one could suspect me of the thought."—"Did not you quit the City of Caen with the formed project of assassinating Marat?"—"I left only for that."—"What persons have you seen in Paris? What have you done since Thursday?" *She gave literal* answers to these questions. "Did *you not want to* fly after the murder?"—"I

should have escaped by the door, if I had not been opposed."—"Are you a woman, and never loved man?"—"Never."

The interrogatory over, Chabot, dissatisfied with the result, scrutinized jealously the person of the girl. He thought he saw a paper, folded, and pinned in her bosom: he raised his hand to seize it. Charlotte had forgotten the paper; and interpreted the movement as an insult to her modesty, to which her bound hands were unable to afford any resistance. Accordingly, she made so sudden a movement, that Chabot unintentionally drew off the kerchief. Charlotte, confused, bent down, as prompt as thought, and almost doubled herself, to conceal her bosom from her judges.

Patriotism had not rendered these men either cynical or insensible; and they seemed to suffer as much as Charlotte Corday herself, by this suffering to her innocence. Her hands were loosened, that she might refasten her dress, which she turned to the wall and did. She then requested, that she might pull down her sleeves, and put on her gloves, before the cords were replaced, shewing the blue marks they had cut into the skin of her arms; in making which request, her accent and manner were so touching, that Harmand, one of her judges, was obliged to retire, to conceal his tears.

The paper thus discovered is still in existence; *and is* an address, in Charlotte's own hand-writ-

ing, to the French nation, instigating them to rise, and shake off the remorseless tyranny that was devouring them, and justifying her projected assassination of the chief of these monsters, "condemned by the universe, and beyond the pale of the law."

She was consigned to her cell, where she was guarded, night and day, by two gendarmes—an immodest indignity she in vain protested against.

The committee of general safety hurried on her trial and execution; and she heard, on her bed, the cries of the newsvendors, who gave the narrative of the murder, in the streets. Charlotte looked to posterity for her apotheosis, and wrote to the Committee:—

"Since I have but a few moments to live, may I hope, citizens, that you will permit me to have my portrait taken? I would like to leave this token of myself to my friends. Besides, as we cherish the image of good citizens, so curiosity makes us sometimes set store on that of great criminals, to perpetuate the horror of their crime. If you deign to acquiesce in my request, I beg you to send me a miniature painter. I renew my prayer to let me sleep alone."

Montané, the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, came, on the 16th, to interrogate the accused. Touched with so much beauty and *youth, and convinced* of the sincerity of a fanati*cism that almost* rendered the assassin innocent

in the eyes of human justice, he wished to save her life. He directed his questions, and tacitly insinuated such answers as would justify a belief of insanity, rather than of crime—a merciful intention, which Charlotte obstinately repelled:—she was transferred to the Conciergerie.

The next day, at eight o'clock, the gendarmes came to lead her to the Revolutionary Tribunal. The hall was above the vaults of the Conciergerie. Before ascending, she arranged her head and her costume, to appear with propriety before death; then smilingly observed to her jailer, "Monsieur Richard, pray take care and have my breakfast ready, by when I come down again: my judges will not take long, I dare say. I wish to take my last meal with Madame Richard and yourself."

The hour of the trial was known throughout Paris. Curiosity, horror, interest, or pity, had collected an immense crowd in the body of the hall, or the adjoining passages. When the accused approached, a dull murmur, like a general curse, ran through the multitude. But scarce had she got through the crowd, and allowed her supreme beauty to shine on all faces, than the murmur of anger was changed into a thrill of interest and admiration. Her features, exalted by the solemnity of the moment, coloured by emotion, troubled by the confusion of a young woman under so many eyes, upheld and ennobled by the grandeur even of crime she wore in her heart and on her

brow, as a virtue; in fine, the joint modesty and pride of her attitude, gave her appearance something of charm, mingled with alarm, that troubled all beholders, and made even the judges appear the criminals before her.

Marat's widow deposed, with sobs, against her. Charlotte, affected by the woman's sorrow, abridged her grief, by exclaiming, "Yes, yes, I killed him!" She then narrated the premeditation of the deed, and the mode of its accomplishment, excusing the deception she had practised, by saying, "It was necessary I should appear to esteem the man, in order to approach him."

The Public Accuser, reproaching her for having struck downward, that she might strike home, asserted that she had, without doubt, been accustomed to crime. At this supposition, which reversed all her ideas, by comparing her to hired murderers, she uttered an exclamation, "The monster! he takes me for an assassin!"

Chauveau-Lagarde, the advocate assigned to her defence, rose in his turn. "The prisoner admits the crime; she admits long premeditation, and the most overwhelming circumstances. Citizens, that is her entire defence. That imperturbable calmness, and complete abnegation of self, which reveal no remorse in the presence of death; that calm and abnegation, sublime under one aspect, *are not in nature*: they can only be explained by *the exaltation of* political fanaticism, which has

put the poniard in her hand. It is for you to judge, what so immovable a fanaticism ought to weigh in the scales of justice. I leave it to your consciences." She thanked him for this address.

She was condemned to death.

During the trial, she had detected, among the auditory, a painter sketching her likeness. She turned herself towards him, without interrupting the proceedings: she thought already of the future, and of immortality.

On her return to the Conciergerie, which she was again to quit, in a few moments, for the scaffold, Charlotte Corday smiled on her fellow-prisoners, ranged in the corridors and the courts, to see her pass. She said to the keeper, "I hoped to breakfast with you, but the judges kept me up there so long. I must beg pardon for having disappointed you." The executioner entered. She asked a minute to finish a letter. It was to the friend and barrister she expected to have defended her, reproaching him for his want of courage. But she was mistaken; Pontécoulant's courage and generosity were warranty for his undertaking the office, but her request had never reached him, he being absent from Paris.

The artist who had been taking a sketch was M. Hauer. He begged the keeper to give him admission to her cell, to finish his work. Charlotte thanked him for the interest he seemed to take in her fate, and placed herself calmly before

instant her head rolled and fell into the basket. An executioner's man, named Legros, raised the head with one hand, and, showing it the people, struck it on the cheek with the other. The inanimate face is said to have turned red, as if at the outrage. But the irritated mob did not accept such truckling. A thrill of horror ran through the crowd, and demanded vengeance for this indignity.

Vergniaud, in prison, on being informed of the death of Charlotte Corday, exclaimed, "She kills us, but she teaches us to die."

PRINCESS DE LAMBALLE.

[A woman of no great powers of mind, but of affectionate character and spotless reputation, fell a victim, not to political intrigues, but simply to her friendship and attachment for Marie Antoinette. On the taking of the Tuilleries, she had voluntarily accompanied the King and Queen to the Temple, until the brutal order came to exclude all the friends of the fallen monarch from his prison. She was not, however, released from captivity, but was transferred to La Force; in which she heard the whole, even the minutest, details of the appalling and atrocious butchery of the Royalist prisoners, to the number, in all the prisons, of nearly 7,000, perpetrated by the orders of Marat and Danton.

The vulgar murderers, who were absolutely hired and paid at so much a-head, by arrangement with Manuel their chief, had yet so much of sincerity in them, and belief in the retributive justice of their acts, that no inducement of interest operated on their pity or mercy, which was, in a few instances, singularly and capriciously shewn. But the chiefs were in no wise so inaccessible to corrupt and sordid arguments. And several of the chief prisoners, particularly ladies, had, at enormous pecuniary sacrifices, obtained a respite *from the sabres* and pikes of the assassins.]

One alone of these victims, ransomed in the judges' intention, could not escape fate. Hébert and L'huilier wished to save her. A cry ruined her. She fell between the tribunal and the street. This was the Princesse de Lamballe. This young widow of the son of the Duc de Penthièvre, was a Princess of Savoie Carignan. Her beauty and the charms of her mind had drawn to her the affectionate attachment of Marie Antoinette. The chaste affection of the Princesse de Lamballe had only answered the odious suspicions of the people by an heroic devotion to the misfortunes of her friend. The more the Queen fell, the more the Princess attached herself to her fall. All her pleasures were in the participation of the Queen's reverses. Péthion had allowed her to follow her Royal friend to the Temple. The commune, more implacable, sent to take her from the arms of the Queen, and threw her into la Force. The father-in-law of Madame de Lamballe, the Duc de Penthièvre, adored her as his own daughter.

The Duc de Penthièvre lived in retirement at the Chateau de Bizy, in Normandy. The people's love protected him there in his old age. He knew of the captivity of his daughter-in-law, and the dangers which menaced the prisons. He watched from a distance over her days. A secret agent of his house, furnished with a sum of a hundred *thousand crowns*, was sent back by order of the *Prince to Paris*, and had bought from one of the

principal agents of the commune the safety of the Princesse de Lamballe. Other inferior agents, domestics or private friends of the house of Penthièvre, were spread in Paris, charged by the Duke to get intimate with the dangerous men who roamed around the prisons, to insinuate themselves into their confidences, to keep watch over the crime, and prevent it, in tempting the cupidity of the assassins. All these measures, of which the centre was the Hôtel de Toulouse, palace of the Duke, had succeeded. At the commune, amongst the judges, amongst the executioners, eyes were watching over the Princess.

She appeared one of the last before the tribunal. She had been spared the day and night of the 2nd of September, as if to give to the people time to satiate themselves before robbing them of their prey. Shut up alone with Madame de Navarre, one of her women, in a chamber high up in the prison, she heard from there, during forty hours, the tumult of the people, the blows of the assassins, the groans of the dying. Voices which pronounced her name mounted to her ears. Sick, lying on her bed, passing from the convulsions of terror to the stupor of sleep, startled again by dreams less frightful than the blows of murder under her window, she fainted every instant. At four o'clock two National Guards entered the Princess's chamber, and ordered her, with a feigned harshness, to *rise and* follow them to the Abbaye. Scarcely

.ble to rise from her seat and support herself upon ner elbow, she supplicated her benefactors to leave her where she was, "wishing as much," said she, "to die there as elsewhere." One of these men leaned towards her bed, and said in her ear, she must obey them, and that her safety depended on it. She begged of the men who were in her chamber to retire, dressed herself quickly and descended the stairs, supported by the National Guard, who seemed interested in her safety.

Hébert and L'huilier were waiting for her. At the aspect of these sinister figures, that appearance of crime, those ruffians with arms stained with blood, half opening the door of the court where the victims were heard falling, the young woman lost the use of her senses, sunk into the arms of her waiting-woman, and returned slowly to life. After a brief interrogatory, "Swear," said the judges to her, "love of equality and liberty, hatred to kings and queens."—"I will willingly take the first oath," said she; "but hatred to the King and Queen, I cannot swear it, for it is not in my heart."

One of the judges leaned towards her: "Swear all," said he, with a significant gesture; "if you do not swear, you are dead." She bowed her head and closed her lips. "Well, go out," said the assistants to her, "and, when you are in the *street, cry, Vive la Nation!*" One of the chief *of the massacre,* named Truchon, or the b

Nicholas, supported the Princess on one side, one of the Acolytes sustained her on the other. She appeared on the threshold, and recoiled at the sight of the heap of mutilated corpses. Forgetting the saving cry which they had recommended her to proffer, "God!" cried she, "what horror!" Truchon put his hand upon her mouth, and made her stride over the dead. The cut-throats, disarmed by this angelic apparition, stopped before so much beauty. She had traversed amidst astonishment and silence more than half the street, when a barber-fellow, named Charlot, drunken with wine and carnage, would, in barbarous jest, raise, with the point of his pike, the cap which covered Madame de Lamballe's hair: the pike, ill-directed by an unsteady hand, grazed the Princess's forehead; the blood gushed out and covered her face.

The murderers, at the sight of blood, thought that the victim was turned over to them, and threw themselves upon her. A villain, named Grizon, laid her at his feet by the blow of a club. The sabres and pikes struck her. Charlot seized her by the hair, and cut off her head. Others stripped the corpse of its clothing, profaned and mutilated it. During these sacrileges, Charlot, Grizon, Hamin, Rodi—history is the eternal pillory of infamous names—carried the head of the Princesse de Lamballe into a neighbouring pot-house, laid it on the counter between the glasses and bottles,

and forced the assistants to drink with them to her death. These drinkers of blood walked in numbers to the doors of the Temple to terrify the eyes of Marie Antoinette by the livid head of her friend. The commissioners of the commune, who were watching at the Temple, with a deputation from the Assembly, warned of the approach of this mob, received it with consideration and prayers. The mob was content to ask leave to parade the head of the Queen's accomplice under the windows of the Royal Family. The commissaries consented to it. Whilst the procession defiled into the garden, under the tower inhabited by the prisoners, the commandant of the post invited the King to show himself to the people. The King obeyed. A commissary, more humane than the rest, placed himself between the Prince and the window where they were raising the horrible trophy. The King, nevertheless, saw the head, and knew it. The Queen, whom they had loudly called for, ignorant of the spectacle prepared for her, rushed towards the window. The King held her in his arms and carried her to the back of the apartment. They only concealed from her the sight of her murdered friend; the same evening she knew the details, and recognised the hatred of the people in their animosity against all she loved.

The mob took their march across the streets of *Paris, and stopped* under the windows of the

Palais-Royal to show to the Duc d'Orleans the head of his sister-in-law, not as a menace, but as a tribute. The Duc d'Orleans was at table with Madame de Buffon, his new favourite, and some other companions of his pleasures. He dared not refuse the homage of a crime offered in the name of the people by assassins. He rose, presented himself at the balcony, and in silence contemplated for some moments, the bleeding head which they raised to him.

Madame de Buffon perceived it. "God!" cried she, joining her hands and throwing herself backward, "it is thus, then, they will soon carry my head in the streets!" The Duke closed the window, and endeavoured to re-assure his favourite. "Poor woman," said he, in speaking of the Princess, "if she had believed me, her head would not be there!" He then sat down, and remained silent and mournful to the end of the meal. His enemies accused him of having pointed out that head to the steel of the assassins, and of having required them to present it to him, to satisfy his vengeance, and to tranquillize his cupidity. He saw an enemy in the Queen's friend, and he was to inherit, by the death of Madame de Lamballe, a dowry, which the estates of the Duc de Penthièvre owed to the widow of his brother-in-law. These imputations fall before the truth. The life of this woman was indifferent to his ambition, her death added nothing to his

fortune. At the moment of the assassination, the Duke and Duchess of Orleans were legally separated. The dowry of Madame de Lamballe did not increase the future property of the Duchess of Orleans, but by a trifling rent of thirty thousand francs a-year. This price of blood was beneath an assassination, and did not even go to the assassin. They threw back upon the Duc d'Orleans all the crimes for which they were embarrassed to find a cause: sad condemnation of a bad renown! They often surprised his hand in the frenzy of the people, and they thought to detect it in this blood; it was not.

When the night came, an unknown person, who piously followed the progress of the train, bought of the murderers, for gold, the head of the Princess, still ornamented with her long hair. He cleansed it from the blood and mud which soiled its features, sealed the head in a leaden coffer, and sent it to the servants of the Duc de Penthièvre, in order that this part of her beautiful body should at least receive the rights of interment in the family tomb. The Duc de Penthièvre awaited in anguish the news that public rumour brought to his chateau at Bizy. On the reception of these dear remains, his daughter, wife of the *Duc d'Orleans*, and the servants, vainly endeavoured *to compose their* countenances, to conceal from *the old man the* knowledge of this outrage. The *Prince read his* misfortune in their eyes. He

raised his hands to heaven, exclaiming "great God, what avails youth, beauty, all the tenderness of woman, if they do not find grace before the people? Who are the people?" He never again rose from his bed of tears. The funeral service was performed in the chamber hung with black. "I think I always hear her," said he, in his last conversations with his daughter. "I always think I see her sitting near the window, in the little study. Do you remember, my child, with what assiduity she used to work there from morning till night, at the labours of her sex, for the poor? I have spent many years with her; I have never discovered a thought in her mind, which was not for the Queen, for me, or for the unfortunate; and, this is the angel they have torn in pieces! Ah! I feel that this idea is digging my grave!" He went down to it, without being a moment consoled.

CECILE RENAULT.

[Not long before the fall of Robespierre, the terror had attained its height, which, according to Lamartine, had its chief support rather in the secret enemies of Robespierre, who delighted to check-mate all his plans for the abandonment of atheism, and of the terror, by sending fresh victims to the scaffold in immense numbers, and actually using his name as the fountain-head from which so much flowed. This exasperated the mind of the people—now tired of their own cruelty, and seeking a return to more peaceful government—against Robespierre; and an adventurer of broken fortunes, dissatisfied with life, conceived the idea of slaying Robespierre. He happened to live in the same house with Collet d' Herbois, (this man's name was L'Admiral.) Armed with pistols and dagger, he watched Robespierre for several days without getting a chance. Destiny reserved him for a greater catastrophe. L'Admiral tired of delay, resolved to kill some one of the rulers, and meeting Collet d' Herbois on the stairs, fired twice and missed him. Collet d' Herbois seized him, and tumbling together down the stairs, L'Admiral could not use his poniard. The pistol shots alarmed the neighbours, and they rushed in and secured the assassin, who at once avowed his *premeditated plan.* At the moment of his arrest the *following incident* occurred.]

CECILE RENAULT.

A young girl of seventeen years, with a chi
igure, had presented herself at Robespierre's h
nd obstinately demanded to speak with
She carried a little basket in her hand. Hei
ier countenance, the innocence of her a
nspired at first no distrust in the mind of R
ierre's hosts. They made her go into
leputy's anti-chamber: she waited a long tim
ast the suspicious immobility and obstina
he stranger, awakened the anxiety of the wo
They summoned her to retire; she insisted
emaining. "A public man," said she, "oug
eceive at all times, those who have occasi
pproach him." They called the guard,
topped the young stranger, and searched i
asket. They found there some work, and
ittle knives; insufficient arms to cause dea
he hands of a child, too. Conducted to the
utionary committee de la Rue des Piques,
terrogated her with the appearance and solen
f a great crime. "Why do you come to R
ierre?" "To see," said she, "how a t
oks." They affected to see, in this reply
vowal of a plot. They connected the arr
he young girl with the attempt of L'Adn
They reported that she was armed with a poi
y the English Government. They spoke
nasked ball in London, where a woman, disgu
s Charlotte Corday and brandishing a knife,
aid, "I seek Robespierre." Others prete

that the committee of public safety had sacrificed the lover of this girl, and that the assassination was a retaliation of love. These chimeras were without foundation. The assassination was but the imagination of a child, who takes her dream for a thought, and who goes to see if the presence of a famous man inspires hatred or love. Reminiscence of Charlotte Corday, indefinite in its end, innocent as an act of childishness.

This child called herself Cecile Renault. She was daughter of a paper-maker of the city. The name of Robespierre, continually repeated before her, by her royalist parents, had suggested to her a curiosity, mixed with horror, for the man of the day. Her replies attested this ingenuousness and candour of courage. "Why," said they, "do you carry with you this packet of women's clothes?" "Because I expect to go to prison." "Why have you those two knives upon you? Do you wish to strike Robespierre?" "No, I never wished to do harm to any one." "Why do you wish to see Robespierre?" "To assure myself, by my own eyes, if the man resembles the image I have formed of him." "Why are you a royalist?" "Because I like a King better than sixty tyrants." They threw her, as well as L'Admiral, into the dungeons. All the artifice of Fouquier Tinville was employed *to transform* childishness into conspiracy, and to *imagine accomplices.*

ST. AMARANTHE.

Now there was at the same time, in one of the most sumptuous hotels in the centre of Paris, recently built by the opulent philosopher, Helvetious, a young woman of incomparable beauty, if she had not had a daughter of sixteen as beautiful and seducing as herself. This female called herself Madame de Sainte Amaranthe. Although she was said to be the widow of a gentleman slain in the affair of the 5th and 6th of October, while defending the door of the Queen, at Versailles, and though she affected the externals, the tone, and luxury of high life, a mystery and doubt hung over this woman, her origin and habits, which caused opinion to float between admiration for her beauty, respect for her misfortunes, and the ambiguity of her position. Her house, attractive in so many ways, had assembled, by taste for the arts, play, and pleasure, from the commencement of the Revolution, the eminent men of all factions: royalists, constituents, Orleanists, Girondins, successively. Mirabeau, Sieyès, Pethion, Chapelier,

Buzot, Louvet, Vergniaud, had in turn frequented it. The graces of Madame de Sainte Amaranthe and the seduction of her mind had effaced all clouds in her vicinity, and filled up the abysses between their opinions.

She preserved, nevertheless, an ostensible attachment for the hopes and memories of royalty. She was allied with the royalists of the ancient aristocracy, and in her saloons she preserved the portraits of the King and Queen, without much mystery. She did not disguise her veneration for those proscribed images of a better time. The prestige of her charms seemed to remove all danger from her; and nature defended her from the scaffold.

A young man of the extinct court, son of M. de Sartines, minister of police in Paris, had just married the daughter of Madame de Sainte Amaranthe. M. de Sartines had formed an intimacy with an actress of the Italian Theatre, Mademoiselle Grandmaison. Although abandoned by her lover, this young actress still wrote to him. She informed him of the progress or suspension of the terror. Sartines, much touched with such constancy, came from time to time to Paris. He there saw his old friend in secret, and learned from her the political secrets. Mademoiselle Grandmaison picked them up from Frial, an actor *at the same* theatre, a fiery patriot, and friend of *Robespierre.*

The hopes of clemency, conceived at the moment
he proclamation of the Supreme Being, had been
iare in which the royalists, the suspected, and the
scribed, were pleased to let themselves be taken.
ey conversed everywhere about the omnipotence
he new Cromwell, or new Monk, of his attempts
uench the religious persecutions, of his wishes
ibolish the scaffold, of his genius to reconstruct
er, and of the leaning to royalty, or for the re-
ration of royalty, which they imagined in him.
e scattered remains of the religious and royalist
ty consoled themselves by these dreams. The
ularity of Robespierre was greater, perhaps, at
moment, in the party of the victims than in
party of the executioners. Madame de Sainte
aranthe was dazzled by it. She wished to
rn to Paris, and re-open her house to feasts
pleasure in the midst of general mourning.
trusted to the genius of Robespierre; she
ned with the desire of knowing him, seducing
, and drawing him over to her opinions. In
Mademoiselle Grandmaison, trembling for
lover, wrote to M. de Sartines, that the moment
sinister, that the Committees and Robespierre
e at variance, that the axe of the guillotine was
pended between a hoped-for mitigation and a
e active terror. Madame de Sainte Amaranthe
ined to nothing but her illusions. She hurried
y her daughter, her son-in-law, and a child of
en, her son, to Paris.

There she was more and more confirmed, the conversation of some friends, in the dispositic she attributed to the triumvir. Undoubtedly th very dispositions were insinuated in her by t agents of Robespierre, for he was seeking at t time to bring everything to his name; ev royalists, by the currents of hope. M. Quesvremont, formerly a dependant of the hou of Orleans, and now intriguing for the friendsl of Robespierre, caused Madame de Sainte An ranthe to partake of his enthusiasm for the p destined man, as he said, who was only waiti the hour when his designs should be ripe, a who was only granting to terror what he was i yet permitted to take away from it. Fanati disciple of Catherine Théos,* M. de Quesvremc spoke to Madame Sainte Amaranthe of the n worship as of a profound conception of the resto of order. He also inspired herself, her daughter, a her son-in-law, with the desire of getting in ated themselves. "It was" said he, "an act whi would inspire confidence in Robespierre." A M quise de Chastenais, an ardent royalist, and m ardent adept of the *Mère de Dieu*, finished Mada de Sainte Amaranthe's determination for this adc tion. Sartines, his mother-in-law, and his wife w

* *A fanatical old* woman, who pretended to second ai *and allied herself* to the Virgin Mary. Strange to say, she *formed a sect*, in which repute said that Robespierre *initiated.*

introduced, by night, into the loft of the *Mère de Dieu*. These two Sainte Amaranthes, handsome royalists, received upon their forehead the kiss of peace from the infirm sybil, which was to be so soon for them the kiss of death. Whether the condescension of these two young women really was a pledge in the eyes of Robespierre,—whether his mind was penetrated with the desire and pride of seeing the two most celebrated beauties of Paris bow themselves before his genius,—whether he wished to hold out, through them, a bait to the proscribed parties to attach them to the regular order which he meditated,—he consented to an interview with his two admirers. Frial, theatre-man and common friend, conducted Robespierre to Madame de Sainte Amaranthe's. He was there received as dictator, who consents to let his designs be anticipated. He was seated at her table in the middle of a circle of guests, chosen by himself. He breathed of enthusiasm. He let himself be gently blamed for the excesses he had suffered too long. He spoke as a man who would turn upon the real criminals that guillotine which was still striking so many innocents. He opened his designs, to let hope shine in. Whether through the indiscretion of his host, or the infidelity of the guests, the committee of general safety got scent of these interviews and these demi-confidences. Vadier had already introduced one of his agents, Senart, into the meetings of the Mère de Dieu.

to observe there the thoughts, and to note down the principal adepts. Vadier knew that Robespierre was her idol, and supposed him her instigator. He suspected him, since the 26th of Prairial, of wishing to draw the people to him by superstitions, and to caress the superior class by presages of clemency. Vadier wished to catch Robespierre at once in ridicule and in treason. He dared not find fault directly with a name which repelled suspicion, and which disconcerted aggression; but he hoped indirectly to pour upon this name a ridicule which would reflect upon his power. It was at most a daring enterprise to show at once to the Convention that the friends of Robespierre were not pure, and that his followers were not inviolable.

The committee of general safety, secretly agreeing with the majority of the committee of public safety, and with the conspirators of the Tallen re-union, ordered the arrest of Catherine Théos and her principal adepts. The committees ordered, at the same time, the arrest of the Marquise de Chastenais, of M. de Quesvremont, of M. de Sartines, and all the family of Saint Amaranthe, without excepting the son, who was scarcely sixteen. They also arrested Mademoiselle Grandmaison and her servant Biret. They resolved to confound all these accusations, strangers to one another, in the grand indictment that Elie Lacoste was drawing up against L'Admiral and Cecile Re

ıault, under the generic and vague name of Foreign Conspiracy. Vadier had been charged with drawng-up the previous report against the sect of Catherine Théos. They had referred it to the nalignity of this old man to give to the puerilities of Don Gerle,* the dark colours of a conspiracy, ınd a varnish of ridicule which would stain even he name of Robespierre.

The name which everybody knew to be at the ottom of this affair, was to be so much the more isible as it would be less expressed by Vadier. Robespierre had felt the blow advance; but the lagger was enveloped in respect. He could not penly take the defence of these sectarians, at a noment when they accused him of wishing to evive the superstitions, to sanctify his dictatorship. He had tried his utmost to get the reading of the report of Vadier to the Convention adourned, under pretext of contempt. Vadier had been inflexible. He had found it necessary to ındergo, in silence, the sarcasms of the reporter, he smiles of the auditory, the malicious insinuaions against his part of Mahomet. Ridicule had ut slightly touched this terrible name, suspicion had thrown its shadow over its incorruptibility. The friends of Robespierre had felt it. They confidently advised him to beware of Vadier—a sort of Brutus, feigning churlishness to disguise

* Another superstitious enthusiast and prophet.

of her to pardon him the death into which her attachment for him had drawn her. His wife surpassed her years by her resignation, and her beauty by her tenderness. She rejoiced to die with mother, husband, and brother. She pressed them by turns in her arms. She did not even repulse Mademoiselle Grandmaison, whom a cruel fate had associated in their misfortune. All jealousy and distance disappeared before death. The dying form but one family.

In order to strike the eyes of the people with a greater appearance of criminality, they had, for the first time since Charlotte Corday, put on all the condemned the red woollen chemise, costume of assassins. An escort of cavalry, and some guns loaded with grape, preceded and followed the *cortège*, which was formed by eight tumbrils. In the first, they had made Madame de Sainte Amaranthe, and Madame d'Epréménil take their seats on the front bench; and on the second were Madame de Sartines and Mademoiselle Grandmaison, two victims of one affection. In the next cart came M. de Sartines and his young brother-in-law, M. de Sombreuil and his son. The three others carried along, with the Montmorencies and the Rohans, the poor and faithful servant of Mdlle. Grandmaison; who wept not for himself, he said, but for his mistress. The march was slow, *the scaffold distant*, the sky vernal, the crowd

enormous. All eyes were centred on that group of female heads, so soon to be struck off. The warm reflection of the red gown set off the whiteness of their necks and the beauty of their complexions. The multitude were enchanted with the splendour of the charms about to be extinguished. The victims exchanged sad smiles, words in whispers, and looks of mutual commiseration. L'Admiral was indignant, lamenting over the fate of his so-called accomplices. "Not one," he exclaimed, "not one knew of my design; I wished alone to avenge humanity." Then turning towards Cecile Renault, who was praying with fervour, "You wished to see a tyrant: well, then, look, there are hundreds beneath you."

The march lasted three hours. The most obscure were put to death first; then Cecile Renalt, Mdlle. Grandmaison, L'Admiral, Madame d'Epréménil, the gentlemen of the ancient monarchy, and the young Sainte Amaranthe. His mother and sister saw the decapitated body tossed into the basket: their turn approached; the mother and daughter embraced, with one long, last kiss, which the executioner interrupted—the head of the daughter joined that of her young brother. Madame de Sainte Amaranthe died last but one; Sartines, the last. During three-quarters of an hour's torture, he had seen the heads of his mistress, his brother-in-law, loved like a son, and his mother-in-law, and his wife fall. He was

dead already, in all his feelings here below, long before the fatal knife touched him.

[This cowardice in Robespierre, who, for fear of risking his position, suffered them to die, did not save him. When does cowardice save a man? His weakness—his enemies knew they were striking him secretly—inflamed their hopes, and led to those concerted attacks which overthrew him. Had no other demerit attached to his name, this base abandonment of so many innocents who depended on him, was crime enough to condemn him.]

THE DUPLAY FAMILY.

THE house in which Robespierre resided, belonged to a joiner and builder, of the name of Duplay, who had adopted with enthusiasm the principles of the Revolution. Connected with several members of the Constituent Assembly, Duplay had besought them to bring Robespierre to his house; and, from the thorough conformity of their opinions, they were not slow to unite on the day of the massacre of the Champ de Mars. Some members of the society of *Friends of the Constitution* thought it would be imprudent to leave Robespierre to return alone to the end of the Marais, across a city still full of excitement, and to abandon him, defenceless, to the dangers they said he was threatened with; so Duplay offered him refuge, which was accepted. From this moment Robespierre continued to reside in the carpenter's family. A long co-habitation, a common table, the intimacy of their lives for several years, converted the hospitality of Duplay into *mutual* attachment, and his landlord's family be-

ly to Robespierre, who made
ions, without taking away any-
licity of their manners, or even
practices. The family comprised
nother, a son, and four young
st of which was about twenty-five,
t eighteen. The father, occupied
raft, went sometimes of an evening
ierre, at the Jacobins; he returned
h admiration for the people's orator,
estation and horror of the enemies of
nd pure a patriot. Madame Duplay
er husband's enthusiasm. The esteem
ed for Robespierre made all the little
untary servitude she paid him, pleasing
able, as though she had been rather his
han his landlady. Robespierre repaid
rvices and devotion with affection. He
the tabernacle of his heart in this poor
He talked with the father, was a son to
ther, was paternal almost to the son, and
ar and brotherly with the daughters: he
ed and experienced, in this interior circle
ed around him, all the sentiments an ardent
d inspires, and experiences only in spreading
lf over a large space.
Even love attached his heart to the place in
hich labour, poverty, and union fixed his life.
leanor Duplay, the eldest daughter of his land-
r, inspired Robespierre with a more serious,

and more tender attachment than he felt for her sisters. That sentiment,—a predilection rather than a passion,—was more reasonable in Robespierre; more ardent and simple in the young woman. Neither of them could have said whence the sentiment dated; but it had grown with age in Eleanor's mind, with habit in Robespierre's heart. This attachment gave him tenderness and no torment, happiness and no anxiety: it was the love that suited a man thrown every day into the agitations of public life, a repose of heart after the weariness of spirit. "A masculine mind, that would know how to die, as well as how to love," he said, speaking of his mistress. They had given her the name of Cornelia. This inclination, avowed by both, and approved by her family, was respected in its purity. They lived in the same house like two betrothed, not two lovers. Robespierre had asked the young woman of her parents: she was promised to him.

"The absence of fortune and the uncertainty of the morrow, hindered him from uniting himself to her before the destiny of France was cleared up; but he only looked forward," he added, "to the moment when, the Revolution ended and established, he could retire from the strife, and marry her he loved, and go and live in Artois, on one of the farms he still preserved from the property of his family, there to confound his obscure happiness in the general felicity."

Of all Eleanor's sisters, the one Robespierre was most attached to was Elizabeth, the youngest of the three, whom his countryman and colleague, Lebas, afterwards sought in marriage, and espoused. This girl, whose friendship for Robespierre cost her her husband's life, eleven months after their union, survived that day half a century, without once denying her worship for Robespierre; and without comprehending the maledictions of the world against this brother of her youth, who ever appeared to her, in all her recollections, so pure, so virtuous, and so mild.

In this home, as elsewhere, Robespierre's habits and pursuits were of the simplest character: he was essentially a man of domesticated habits. Among the few friends who visited him, mostly politicians, was *a woman*, Madame de Chalabre, a lady of rank and wealth, enthusiastic as to Robespierre, devoting herself to him, like the widows of Corinth or Rome to the Apostles of the new Faith, offering him her fortune to serve in the popularization of his ideas; and seeking the affection of Duplay's wife and daughters, to merit a look from Robespierre at such meetings.

The Revolution was the usual topic of conversation. At other times, after a short conversation and some playful raillery with the daughters Robespierre, who was desirous of adorning th *mind of his wife*, gave readings to the famil *They were usually* from the tragedies of Racin

who, with Rousseau, was his favourite author. He loved to declaim these fine verses, whether to exercise himself in the theatre for the tribune, or to raise these simple minds to the level of the grand sentiments and catastrophes of antiquity, to which each day was drawing his life and career more near. He rarely went out of an evening. He took Madame Duplay, and her daughters to the play two or three times a year. It was always to the Théatre Français, and to classic representations. He only loved the tragic declamations which re-called the tribune, tyranny, the people, great crimes, great virtues: theatrical even in his dreams and in his amusements.

At Robespierre's downfall, the Duplays were, of course, involved in his ruin. The whole family were arrested, and thrown into the Conciergerie.

Before the house, which he had inhabited, a band of women stopped the procession, and danced round about the cart, on the day of his execution.

A child holding in its hand a butcher's pail filled with bullock's blood, and dipping a broom in it, sprinkled it against the walls of the house. Robespierre shut his eyes during this halt, not to see the roof of his friend insulted, on which he had brought misfortune. This was his only gesture of sensibility, during the thirty-six hours of torture.

Duplay was executed with Robespierre. And

in the evening of the same day, these furies of vengeance invaded the prison where his wife had been thrown, strangled her, and hung her to the rod of the bed-curtains.

[Lebas, the husband of Elizabeth Duplay, had shot himself dead at the moment of Robespierre's arrest; his body had been removed to the tribunal, and had accompanied the condemned to the scaffold, to be buried with them in the same tomb.]

Some weeks after a young woman, clad as a washerwoman, and bearing a young child in her arms, presented herself at the door of the furnished house Saint Just had inhabited, and requested a few words in private with the daughter of the owner. The stranger was the widow of Lebas, daughter of Duplay. After her husband's suicide, and the death of her father, the murder of her mother, and the imprisonment of her sisters, Madame Lebas had changed her name, and had attired hesrelf as a working woman; she was getting her own and her child's living by washing linen in the boats, which serve as wash-houses on the river. Some persecuted republicans alone knew her disguise, and admired her courage. No vestige of her husband; neither inheritance, nor portrait was left her. She adored his memory *in silence.*

The young fugitive had heard that Saint Just's *hostess, a painter* by profession, was possessed of



portrait of Robespierre's disciple,* painted by ier, a short time before his death. She burned vith the desire to possess this picture, which would at least recall her husband in the figure of the young Republican, Lebas' colleague and dearest friend. The artist herself, reduced to indigence by her own father's imprisonment, prosecuted as a friend of Saint Just, asked six louis for her work. Madame Lebas did not posses this sum. She had saved nothing from the sequestration, but a trunk of clothes, linen and wedding garments, all her fortune. She offered this trunk, and all it contained, as the price of the portrait. The offer was accepted. The poor widow brought back the articles at night, and carried away the treasure.

POSTCRIPT.

The foregoing selection of the Heroic Women of the French Revolution is not, for a moment, suggested as including the whole of the female characters of the Revolution worthy of notice. It gives but a few even of those prominent by the direct and immediate influence they exercised in the Revolution. The limits of the volume preclude an extension of this most interesting subject.

* St. Just.









